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The Tariff Commission

Vol. 3

REPORT

OF THE

AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE

WITH APPENDIX

96688
15/6/09

London

PUBLISHED FOR THE TARIFF COMMISSION, 7, VICTORIA STREET, S.W.

BY

P. S. KING & SON

Orchard House, 2 & 4, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.

1906

The Tariff Commission

Vol. 3

REPORT

OF THE
M^cCORQUODALE & Co., LIMITED, Printers, London.

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CONTENTS

REPORT.

SECTION I.	PARAGRAPH	PARAGRAPH.
		1
(A) Agricultural Policy before 1846	12	Experiences of Farmers— <i>continued</i> .
(B) Agriculture in the Nineteenth Century	35	(7) Hops
(C) International conditions	84	(8) Fruit and Market Gardening
(D) Recent Agricultural conditions in the United Kingdom	119	(9) Animals and Meat
(E) Imports of Agricultural Produce and their relations to the Home Production	158	(10) Dairying and Poultry Farming
(F) Experiences of Farmers:		(11) Milling
(1) Corn Crops	198	(12) Co-operation
(2) Green Crops	214	(13) Rent, Rates and Taxes
(3) Pasture	219	(14) Labour and Wages
(4) Hay and Straw	226	(15) Cottage Accommodation
(5) Flax	232	(16) Land Purchase
(6) Tobacco	238	(G) Conclusions
		Signatures of Committee
		Provisional Scale of Duties

APPENDIX.

SECTION II.—Draft Questions to Witnesses	477
SECTION III.—Evidence of Witnesses:	
Agriculture (General)	493
Agriculture (Miscellaneous)	720
Grazing	748
Breeding	853
Dairying	888
Hay and Straw	929
Market Gardening	936
Fruit	954
Horticulture	993
Hops	997
Meat	1091
Bacon	1103
Milling	1151
Flax	1185
Tobacco	1194
Sugar Beet	1199
SECTION IV.—Forms of Inquiry	1205
SECTION V.—Replies to Forms of Inquiry:	
(A) Conditions with regard to Cultivation:	1221
(B) Agricultural Machinery and Implements:	1240
(C) Co-operation and Market Organisation:	1244
(D) Imports of Agricultural Products	1255
(E) Sources of Supply	1269
(F) Foreign Competition in the Home Market:	
Wheat, Barley, Oats, Offals, &c.	1283
Flour and Oatmeal	1298
Starch	1364
Cakes and Oils	1367
Hay, &c.	1374
Hops	1375
Fruit, Flowers, Vegetables, Seeds, &c.	1379
Cider	1383
Beef, Mutton, &c.	1385
Bacon and Hams	1389
Butter, Cheese, Eggs, &c.	1395
Margarine and Lard	1403
(G) Foreign Competition in the Colonies	1411
(H) Foreign Tariffs and their effect	1417
(I) Employment in Agric. Manufact.	1437
(J) Railway and Shipping Rates	1446
(K) Industrial Combination	1472
(L) Remedial Measures:	
General	1481
Agriculture	1484
Wheat, Barley, Oats	1497
Starch	1509
Oils and Cakes	1511
Fruit, Vegetables, Plants, &c.	1513
Meat, Bacon, &c.	1515
Cheese, Butter, Margarine, Eggs, &c.	1520
Import Duties not desired	1524
(L1) Proposed Duty on Corn and Flour:	
Beneficial	1532
Beneficial if Taxes reduced	1597
Beneficial if Bounty granted	1606
Of little Benefit	1614
Of no Benefit	1628
Colonial Preference	1643
Higher Duties desired	1658
Duty on Flour	1696
Other suggestions	1762

CONTENTS.

SECTION V.—*continued.*

	PARAGRAPH.		PARAGRAPH.
(L2) Proposed 5% Duty on Meat and Dairy Produce:		Higher Duty on Live Meat . . .	1920
Beneficial	1772	Admission of Store Cattle . . .	1941
Beneficial if Taxes Reduced . . .	1837	Danger of Infectious Diseases . .	1951
A Little Benefit	1843	No distinction between Live and Dead Meat	1967
Of no Benefit	1847	Marking of Meat	1991
Colonial Preference	1857	Imported Meat sold as British . .	1996
Higher Duty desired	1869	(L4) Suggested reduction of Foreign Tariffs	2001
(L3) Duty on Live and Dead Meat:			
Higher Duty on Dead Meat	1894		

SECTION VI.—Memoranda:

(A) The Possibilities of Sugar Manufacture in the United Kingdom. By the Earl of Denbigh	2013	(C) Tobacco Cultivation in the United Kingdom	2032
(B) Sugar Beet Cultivation in the United Kingdom. By Mr. Sigmund Stein	2023	(D) The Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill. By Mr. J. L. Green	2035

INDEX.

TABLES.

No.	PARAGRAPH.
1. Quantities of Wheat and Wheat Flour Imported into Great Britain, 1791–1820	22
2. Average Prices of Wheat and Quantities Imported into Great Britain for Home Consumption, 1815–1822	29
3. Average Prices of Wheat and Quantities Imported into Great Britain for Home Consumption, 1823–1836	33
4. Number of Acts of Inclosure and Areas Inclosed of Commons and Commonable Lands in each Three-Year Period, 1727–1845.	37
5. Total Areas Inclosed, 1727–1845	50
6. Imports of Wheat and Flour and Estimated Population Fed from Home-grown Wheat, 1831–1900	53
7. Average Prices of Wheat, Barley and Oats and Ratios of Barley and Oats to Wheat in England and Wales	72
8. Average Price of all Descriptions of Meat in the United Kingdom as Percentage of Price in 1900	79
9. Prices of Corn, Meat, &c., 1871–1905	81
10. Wheat Supply in France, and Price, 1831–1903	89
11. Wheat Supply in Italy, and Price, 1862–1903	95
12. Cost of Bringing Wheat from various Foreign Wheat Centres to the United Kingdom	105
13. Exports of Wheat from Russia	106
14. Progress of Agriculture in the United States, according to Census Returns	108
15. Progress of Agriculture in Germany	109
16. Number of Live Stock	111
17. Average Value of Wheat on Farms in the United States, and Freight-rates, Chicago to New York (Rail) and New York to Liverpool	114
18. Average Annual Acreage under Corn Crops in the United Kingdom since 1871.	120
19. Areas under Corn Crops (all kinds) in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland	124
20. Average Acreage under Wheat, Barley and Oats in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland	127
21. Estimated Average Yield of Grain (in Bushels) per Acre	132
22. Estimated Average Annual Total Yield of Grain	133
23. Areas under Green Crops of all kinds in the United Kingdom since 1871.	135
24. Areas under Potatoes, Turnips and Swedes in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland	136
25. Estimated Average Annual Yield of various Green Crops	138
26. Areas under Permanent Pasture, for Hay and not for Hay, in the Different Divisions of the United Kingdom	139
27. Areas under Flax, Hops and Small Fruit in the United Kingdom	141

CONTENTS.

TABLES—continued.

No.		PARAGRAPH.
28.	Distribution of Cattle in the United Kingdom	142
29.	Distribution of Sheep in the United Kingdom	143
30.	Distribution of Pigs in the United Kingdom	143
31.	Live Stock Enumerated in the United Kingdom	145
32.	Estimated Equivalent of Meats Produced from Home-fed Live Stock	146
33.	Estimated Production of Home-fed Meats per Head of Population	148
34.	Numbers Employed in Agriculture, 1851-1901	149
35.	Course of Agricultural Wages in United Kingdom	157
36.	Imports of Agricultural Foodstuffs	158
37.	Average Annual Imports of Wheat and Flour (in Equivalent of Grain) into the United Kingdom	163
38.	Percentage of Quantities of Wheat and Flour (in Equivalent of Grain) Imported into the United Kingdom	165
39.	Percentage of Wheat and Flour Imports from Principal Countries, 1901-1905	167
40.	Imports of Barley into the United Kingdom	169
41.	Percentage of Quantities of Barley Imported from Various Countries	171
42.	Imports of Oats into the United Kingdom	172
43.	Percentage of Quantities of Oats Imported from Various Countries	173
44.	Annual Consumption of Wheat, Barley and Oats in the United Kingdom, distinguishing Imports and Home Produce	175
45.	Annual Consumption of Wheat, Barley and Oats per Head of Population, distinguishing Imports and Home Produce	177
46.	Imports of Maize into the United Kingdom	178
47.	Percentage of Quantities of Maize Imported from Various Countries	180
48.	Imports of Live and Dead Meat	181
49.	Average Annual Imports of Live and Dead Meat	185
50.	Imports of Live and Dead Meats (of all Descriptions, in Equivalent of Dead Meat) into the United Kingdom	187
51.	Imports of Beef and Veal (Live and Dead, in Equivalent of Dead) into the United Kingdom	189
52.	Imports of Mutton and Lamb (Live and Dead, in Equivalent of Dead) into the United Kingdom	191
53.	Imports of Pig-Meats into the United Kingdom	193
54.	Estimated Average Annual Consumption of Home-fed and Imported Meats	195

DIAGRAMS.

Fig.		
1.	Number of Acts of Inclosure and Area Inclosed, 1727-1845	41
2.	Total Areas Inclosed, 1727-1845	45
3.	"Gazette" Prices of Wheat in England and Wales, 1801-1900	55
4.	Eleven-Yearly Average of "Gazette" Prices of Wheat in England and Wales	59
5.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat and Barley in England and Wales	66
6.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat and Oats in England and Wales	69
7.	Average Price of Meat in the United Kingdom as Percentage of Price in 1900, 1841-1902	74
8.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Meat in the United Kingdom as Percentage of Price in 1900	77
9.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat in England and Wales and France	87
10.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat in England and Wales and Italy	93
11.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat in England and Wales and Holland	97
12.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat in England and Wales, Prussia and Bavaria	99
13.	Eleven Years' Average Prices of Wheat, Barley and Oats in Bavaria	102
14.	Average Corn Acreage in the United Kingdom in Consecutive Periods, distinguishing Wheat, Barley, Oats, and Total Corn Area	121
15.	Percentage of Total Corn Area in United Kingdom under Wheat, Barley and Oats, in 1871-75 and 1901-03	125
16.	Acreage under Wheat, Barley and Oats in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland respectively, in 1871-75 and 1901-03	129
17.	Prices of Wheat, Flour and Bread, 1818-1904	377
18.	Eleven-Year Average Prices of Bread, Wheat and Flour	379

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES

NAME OF WITNESS.	SUBJECT.	PARA- GRAPH.
G. H. ACTON (Co. Mayo) ..	Grazing ..	747
C. T. ADAMS (Bucks.) ..	General ..	493
R. G. ADAMSON ..	Grazing ..	755
(Co. Meath)		
A. AMOS (Kent) ..	Hops ..	997
R. A. ANDERSON ..	Miscellaneous ..	720
(Sec. Irish Agricultural Organisation Society)		
Rt. Hon. T. ANDREWS ..	Dairying ..	888
(Co. Down)		
E. G. ARMSTRONG ..	Grazing ..	757
(Co. Galway)		
P. F. ASTILL ..	General ..	498
(Representing the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture)		
J. BALDWIN (Sussex) ..	Hops ..	1000
T. M. BARKER ..	Breeding ..	850
(Co. Wicklow)		
W. H. BARTON ..	Breeding ..	853
(Co. Kilkenny)		
J. G. BATEMAN (Co. Kerry) ..	Grazing ..	763
W. F. BELL (Forfarshire) ..	General ..	503
W. W. BERRY (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1003
J. H. W. BEST ..	Hops ..	1009
(Worcestershire)		
W. E. BEST (Co. Antrim) ..	General ..	509
V. H. BETTINGSON ..	General ..	513
(Huntingdonshire)		
H. BIDDELL (Suffolk) ..	Milling ..	1151
S. BIDE (Surrey) ..	Hops ..	1012
J. BIGGAR ..	General ..	518
(Vice-President Scottish Chamber of Agriculture)		
W. T. BLASTOCK ..	Grazing ..	766
(Representing Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture)		
J. BOLGER (Co. Wexford) ..	General ..	520
C. BRISSENDEN (Sussex) ..	Hops ..	1013
F. BROWNING (Yorkshire) ..	Dairying ..	900
G. BUNYARD ..	Horticulture ..	993
(President of the Nursery and Seed Association of Great Britain and Ireland)		
Capt. J. T. BUTLER ..	Grazing ..	770
(Co. Meath)		
T. CASSWELL (Lincolnshire) ..	Breeding ..	856
J. CHAPMAN (Surrey) ..	Hops ..	1020
J. & F. CHATFIELD (Sussex) ..	Horticulture ..	994
R. CHILDREN (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1021
J. CLARKE (Co. Donegal) ..	General ..	527
S. CLARKE ..	Dairying ..	905
(South Fermanagh)		
W. COGGAN ..	Meat ..	1091
(Hon. Treas. Nat. Federation of Meat Traders' Associations)		
R. W. COOPER (Co. Cork) ..	Grazing ..	774
W. COOPER (Smithfield) ..	Meat ..	1092
T. S. CORPE ..	General ..	533
(Representing the Somerset Chamber of Agriculture and the South Somerset Farmers' Club)		
Capt. F. H. CRAWFORD ..	Miscellaneous ..	739
(Co. Antrim)		
J. G. CRAWFORD ..	Flax ..	1185
(Co. Antrim)		
C. J. CROSFIELD ..	Sugar Beet ..	1199
(President Lancashire Sugar Refiners' Association)		
G. E. DAINTREE (Cambs.) ..	General ..	543
J. W. DENNIS ..	General ..	548
(Lincolnshire)		
W. R. DIXON (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1023
G. A. ELLIOTT (Bucks.) ..	Grazing ..	780

NAME OF WITNESS.	SUBJECT.	PARA- GRAPH.
Colonel NUGENT EVERARD, J.P., D.L. (President of the County Meath and other agricultural societies)	Tobacco ..	1194
E. FENESSY (Co. Kilkenny) ..	Grazing ..	783
G. FISKE ..	General ..	567
(Representing the East Suffolk Chamber of Agriculture)		
G. E. FRANCIS (Worcester) ..	Miscellaneous ..	743
W. FRANKISH ..	Breeding ..	862
(Lincolnshire)		
H. GARDNER (Surrey) ..	Hops ..	1027
W. GEORGE ..	General ..	574
(Representing the majority of the Northamptonshire Chamber of Agriculture)		
G. GOOD ..	General ..	580
(Representing the Blandford Farmers' Club)		
P. R. GRAY (Co. Kildare) ..	General ..	584
J. GREENHILL ..	General ..	590
(Co. Londonderry)		
W. K. GREHAN ..	Grazing ..	790
(Co. Roscommon)		
J. MITCHELL HARRIS ..	Bacon ..	1103
(Wiltshire)		
M. G. E. HAYDEN ..	General ..	595
(Co. Waterford)		
W. HENDERSON, J.P. ..	General ..	596
(Perthshire)		
T. HESKETT ..	General ..	603
(Representing the Cumberland and Westmoreland Chamber of Agriculture)		
E. C. HILDEN (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1028
H. T. HINCKES ..	Grazing ..	794
(Representing the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture)		
W. HIPWELL ..	Milling ..	1158
(Bedfordshire)		
R. HOLBROOK (Notts.) ..	General ..	609
Colonel J. F. HONEYBALL ..	Hops ..	1029
(Kent)		
W. W. HUBBLE (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1032
J. HUDSON (London) ..	Bacon ..	1112
J. IDIENS (Worcestershire) ..	Fruit ..	954
J. KENDRICK ..	Dairying ..	911
(Representing the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture)		
S. KIDNER (Somerset) ..	General ..	613
H. KING (Bedfordshire) ..	Market ..	936
(Representing the Biggleswade and District Trade and Agricultural Association)	Gardening	
H. O. KING (Oxfordshire) ..	Hay and Straw ..	929
C. LAKE (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1036
T. LATHAM (Oxfordshire) ..	General ..	618
E. Le MAY ..	Hops ..	1039
(Sec. of the Special Conferences appointed by the Canterbury, Farnham, Hereford and Worcester, Maidstone, Rochester, Rye and Tunbridge Wells Farmers' Clubs)		
T. F. LEVINGE ..	Grazing ..	798
(Co. Westmeath)		
E. LORD, Junr. (Kent) ..	Hops ..	1045
S. J. McCARTNEY, J.P. ..	Bacon ..	1118
(Co. Antrim)		
F. McDONNELL ..	General ..	621
(Co. Galway)		
J. C. McKAY (Co. Kerry) ..	Grazing ..	803
D. MACKINTOSH ..	Grazing ..	806
(Queen's County)		
M. C. MAGAN (Co. Longford) ..	Grazing ..	808
A. MARSH (Staffordshire) ..	Bacon ..	1126

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES—continued.

NAME OF WITNESS.	SUBJECT.	PARA- GRAPH.	NAME OF WITNESS.	SUBJECT.	PARA- GRAPH.
FRANK MARTIN	Grazing	812	B. B. SAPWELL (Norfolk) . .	General	662
(Representing the Boston Branch of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture)			Capt. P. W. SEWARD	Hops	1082
J. D. MAXTED (Kent)	Hops	1048	(Hants.)		
P. E. MEREDITH	General	628	Col. SHARMAN-CRAWFORD .	General	537
(Queen's County)			(Representing the Royal Ulster Agricultural Association)		
G. MILLER	Market	943	A. W. SHAW	Bacon	1132
(Nominated by the Market Gardeners', Nurserymen's, and Farmers' Association, Covent Garden)	Gardening		(Limerick and Cork)		
A. MISKIN (Kent)	Hops	1051	E. SHENTALL (Derbyshire) . .	Fruit	970
T. MOLYNEUX	Grazing	818	W. ANKER SIMMONS, F.S.I.	General	670
(Co. Wicklow)			(Representing the Berks. and Oxon. Chamber of Agriculture)		
G. MONRO	Fruit	961	MICHAEL SIMONS	Fruit	975
(London and Manchester)			(Lanarkshire)		
J. W. MURPHY	General	632	H. H. SMITH (Wiltshire) . .	Bacon	1139
(Co. Tipperary)			J. W. SMITH	Hops	1085
F. NEAME (Kent)	Hops	1054	(Herefordshire)		
M. NETHERSOLE (Kent)	Hops	1060	J. SPEIR (Lanarkshire)	General	677
E. M. NUNNELEY	General	637	D. A. SPENCE (Forfar)	Grazing	832
(Representing the minority of the Northamptonshire Chamber of Agriculture)			CHARLES STEEL	Market	952
D. R. O'BRIEN	Dairying	893	(Representing the Market Gardeners', Nurserymen's and Farmers' Association, Covent Garden)	Gardening	
(Co. Limerick)			J. STEVEN (Ayrshire)	Dairying	920
H. M. ODLUM (Co. Kildare) . .	Grazing	822	C. B. STIBY	General	690
C. F. PADDISON	General	647	(Representing the Winfrith Farmers' Club)		
(Lincolnshire)			R. STRATTON	Grazing	838
W. PARLOUR (Co. Durham) . .	Breeding	867	(Monmouthshire and Gloucester- shire)		
J. M. PARRY	Hops	1060	J. SUGGITT	General	696
(Herefordshire)			(Representing the Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs and Chambers of Agriculture)		
J. A. PARTRIDGE	Hops	1064	JAMES SWEET	Fruit	980
(Worcestershire)			(Middlesex)		
C. E. PEARSON	Horticulture	996	H. TALLENT (Norfolk)	General	699
(Hon. Sec. and Treas. Horticultural Trades Association of Great Britain and Ireland)			A. R. TATTERSALL	Milling	1176
E. PIGG, Junr.	Hay and Straw	936	(London)		
(Hertfordshire)			R. THOMPSON, J.P.	Flax	1192
J. POWELL	Hops	1067	(Co. Antrim)		
(Representing the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture)			W. TICE (Surrey) 1	Hops	1087
J. H. POWER	Dairying	914	J. P. TOONE (Warwick)	General	705
(Co. Tipperary)			E. VINSON (Kent)	Fruit	982
J. RANK (Yorkshire)	Milling	1165	T. L. WALKER	Hops	1089
J. W. REDMOND	Milling	1173	(Worcestershire)		
(Co. Dublin)			C. A. WEBB (Co. Cork)	Breeding	879
F. REEVE (Sussex)	Hops	1075	T. W. WEBBER, J.P., D.L.	General	707
J. RICHARDS (Bucks.)	Grazing	824	(Co. Kildare)		
J. RILEY (Herefordshire) . . .	Fruit	967	W. WHITE	Dairying	923
J. ROCHFORD	Market	948	(Representing the Derbyshire Agricultural and Horticultural Society)		
(Hertfordshire)	Gardening		J. B. WHITWORTH	Milling	1181
Colonel ROLLESTON	General	651	(Northamptonshire)		
(Representing the Nottingham Agricultural Society)			Professor D. D. WILLIAMS	General	710
J. ROWELL	General	654	(Cardigan)		
(Representing the Huntingdon- shire Agricultural Society)			J. WILLINGTON	Grazing	845
M. SANDFORD	Breeding	872	(Co. Tipperary)		
(Representing the Sussex County Agricultural Society)			C. D. WISE (Glos.)	Fruit	984
H. S. SANKEY (Co. Cavan) . . .	Grazing	828	C. S. WOLTON	Breeding	882
W. SANTER (Kent)	Hops	1078	(Representing the Suffolk Agri- cultural Association)		
			R. WRIGHT (Co. Kildare) . .	General	718



AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE.

1

A special Agricultural Committee was appointed by the Tariff Commission to examine the proposals submitted by Mr. Chamberlain to the country and their bearing upon the agricultural interest, and to report to the Commission as to—(1) Their effect on present agricultural conditions ; (2) Whether any modifications in detail are desirable, and, if so, what should be the nature of such modifications, having due regard to the general interests of the community ; (3) The best way in which the interests of the manufacturing and the agricultural industries, where they conflict, can be harmonised.

Terms of
Reference

The third section of the foregoing reference—that is to say, the harmonising of the various interests—will be dealt with in the FINAL REPORT of the Commission, when all branches of industry, including Agriculture, are taken into consideration.

The Committee was constituted as follows :—

Chairman—¹ The Rt. Hon. HENRY CHAPLIN, Stafford House, St. James's, London (Ex-President, Board of Agriculture ; Ex-President, Local Government Board).

Members of the
Agricultural
Committee

2

Mr. R. BARTER, St. Anns Hill, County Cork (Dairy Farmer and Stock Breeder ; President, County Cork Agricultural Society, 1898-1900 ; Chairman, Agricultural Section, Cork Exhibition).

Mr. JAMES BIGGAR (since deceased), Grange Farm, Dalbeattie, N.B. (Tenant Farmer ; Proprietor and Exporter of Galloway Cattle ; Vice-President, Scottish Chamber of Agriculture ; Chairman, Council of Galloway Cattle Society ; President, Galloway Cattle Sales Association ; Examiner in Agriculture for N.D.A. ; Delegate to Canada to report on Agriculture of Canada ; Governor, West of Scotland College of Agriculture).

Mr. PETER BLUNDELL, Ream Hills, Weeton, Kirkham, Lancashire (Tenant Farmer for 33 years ; Member of Council, Royal Lancashire Agricultural Society for 30 years ; Judge of Shire Horses at Royal Agricultural and London Shire Horse Shows ; Prize Holder for Farms and Stock ; Chairman, Fylde Rural District Council ; Poor Law Guardian for many years).

Mr. THOMAS BROWN, West Norfolk Farmers' Manure and Chemical Company, Limited, King's Lynn (Managing Director, West Norfolk Farmers' Manure and Chemical Company since 1882 ; Alderman, Norfolk County Council ; has conducted or been interested in Agricultural experiments in many portions of most of the Eastern Counties).

3

¹ Mr. WILLIAM COOPER, 30, Alleyn Road, West Dulwich, London, S.E. (Chairman, Cattle and Meat Trades Section, London Chamber of Commerce).

¹ Mr. JOHN W. DENNIS, 26, James Street, Covent Garden (Farms 4,000 acres ; W. Dennis & Sons, Farmers, Potato Growers and Merchants, English and Foreign Fruit and Vegetable Brokers).

¹ Lord DESBOROUGH, Taplow Court, Taplow, Bucks. (Vice-Chairman, The Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture ; Chairman, Bucks. Chamber of Agriculture ; J.P. and D.L.).

Mr. W. FRANKISH, J.P., Culme, St. Catherine's, Lincoln (Tenant Farmer ; Member of the various Agricultural bodies in Lincolnshire ; Member of the Central Chamber of Agriculture).

Mr. J. M. FRASER, Chairman and Managing Director, Macdonald, Fraser & Co., Ltd., Live Stock Salesmen, Auction Mart, Perth (Live stock salesman for over 40 years ; extensive landholder).

¹ Sir WM. J. GOULDING, Bart., Millicent, Sallins, Co. Kildare, Ireland (Chairman, W. & H. M. Goulding, Ltd., Chemical Manure Manufacturers ; Chairman, Great Southern and Western Railway of Ireland).

4

Mr. P. R. GRAY, Spring Lodge, Athy (farms 232 acres in Kildare).

¹ Mr. J. MITCHELL HARRIS, Calne, Wiltshire (Managing Director, Charles and Thomas Harris & Co., Bacon Curers).

¹ Members of the Tariff Commission.

5

Mr. R. W. HUDSON, Danesfield, Marlow (Farms 2,600 acres in Bucks. and Berks. ; Prize Winner of Home-bred Aberdeen-Angus Cattle ; one of the original Founders of the English Aberdeen-Angus Society ; owner of Shire horses ; breeder of Berkshire pigs ; J.P. and High Sheriff).

Mr. G. MALCOLM, Estates Office, Invergarry, Inverness-shire (Agricultural Correspondent of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries ; Factor on Corrour, the extensive Inverness-shire estate of Sir John Stirling Maxwell, Bart.).

Mr. A. H. H. MATTHEWS, Secretary, Central Chamber of Agriculture, Broad Sanctuary Chambers, 20, Tothill Street, Westminster, S.W. (For seven years Organising Secretary, National Agricultural Union ; formerly Manager of Dairy Farm in Surrey and Mixed farm in Kent).

Mr. F. NEAME, The Offices, Faversham, Kent (Nominated by Conference of Hop Growers ; Deputy of the Delegates of the Farmers' Clubs from the Hop Growing Districts of England ; Farms about 1,800 acres in East Kent ; Agent for Earl Sondes' Kent and Norfolk Estates and other estates in Kent ; Breeder and Exhibitor of the Kentish or Romney Marsh sheep ; Assistant Commissioner for giving effect to the Extraordinary Tithe Redemption Act, 1886 ; F.I.S.).

6

Mr. ROUSE ORLEBAR, Hinwick Lodge, near Wellingborough (Land Owner in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire ; J.P. and D.L. for Bedfordshire ; Chairman of the Farmers' Club ; Member of the Council of the Central Chamber of Agriculture ; President of the Bedfordshire Chamber of Agriculture).

Hon. CECIL PARKER, Eaton Estate Office, Eccleston, Chester (Resident Agent for the Duke of Westminster's Cheshire Estates ; late Resident Agent for the Earl of Ilchester's Estate in Wiltshire, Somerset, Dorset and Devon, 1876-81 ; Member of Council, Royal Agricultural Society of England, since 1881).

¹ Mr. C. J. PHILLIPS, Old Dalby Hall, Leicestershire ; J.P., D.L. (Land Owner and Farmer, Leicestershire ; Deputy-Chairman, Watney, Combe, Reid & Co., Ltd., Brewers).

Mr. OWEN PRICE, Valuer and Appraiser, Nantyrharn Cray, Brecon, Wales (Tenant Farmer).

Mr. J. STRATTON, Chilcombe, Winchester (Tenant Farmer of over 6,000 acres in Hampshire and Wiltshire ; Representative of Hampshire on the Central Chamber of Agriculture for 20 years ; Member of Farmers' Club).

7

Mr. C. D. WISE, Overbury Vicarage, Tewkesbury (Agent for the Toddington Estates in Gloucestershire, including the management of the fruit farms of nearly 1,000 acres ; Member of Council, Fruit Growers' Federation ; F.S.I. ; F.R.H.S.).

REPORT OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE.

Scope of the Inquiry

Having carefully considered the nature of the inquiry we were instructed to undertake, we found that, in order to give full effect to it, it would be necessary not only to investigate present agricultural conditions in the United Kingdom, but to undertake a wide survey of British agricultural policy and of international market conditions in modern times. We have, therefore, included in the report a survey of agricultural policy in past times, especially of the group of statutes and other measures known as the Corn Laws.

8

In pursuance of our inquiry, we found it desirable to adopt methods similar to those which were adopted for the larger of the manufacturing industries (see reports of the Tariff Commission on the Iron and Steel, Cotton and Woollen industries). Sub-Committees were constituted in regard to special branches of agriculture.

Oral and Written Evidence

We have held 33 meetings and issued Forms of Inquiry to agriculturists and others (Sections IV. and V.). We examined 147 witnesses, farmers, land agents, &c., representing the agricultural interest in each of the eight agricultural divisions into which the United Kingdom is divided. As will be seen from the extracts of evidence published in Section III. of this report, many of these witnesses were nominated by Chambers of Agriculture and other agricultural bodies. In addition to the oral evidence, the Commission received replies to the Forms of Inquiry from 2,103 agriculturists and others concerned in agriculture, care being taken to secure as representative a canvass as possible in all parts of the country, and abstracts of these replies are published in Section V.

¹ Member of the Tariff Commission.

The evidence is thus based on oral and written statements from 2,251 farmers and agriculturists generally, holding and owning farms whose total area is about 1,900,000 acres, distributed as follows, according to the divisions adopted by the Board of Agriculture :—

- 585 residing in Division 1. (Bedford, Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, Huntingdon, Lincoln, London, Middlesex, Norfolk, Suffolk, York (East Riding).)
- 349 residing in Division 2. (Berks, Bucks, Hants, Kent, Leicester, Northampton, Notts, Oxford, Rutland, Surrey, Sussex, Warwick.)
- 244 residing in Division 3. (Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Salop, Somerset, Wilts, Worcester.)
- 339 residing in Division 4. (Chester, Cumberland, Derby, Durham, Lancaster, Northumberland, Stafford, Westmoreland, York (North Riding), York (West Riding).)
- 48 residing in Division 5. (Wales.)
- 145 residing in Division 6. (Aberdeen, Banff, Berwick, Clackmannan, Edinburgh, Elgin (or Moray), Fife, Forfar, Haddington, Kincardine, Kinross, Linlithgow, Nairn, Peebles, Perth, Roxburgh, Selkirk.)
- 104 residing in Division 7. (Argyll, Ayr, Bute, Caithness, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Inverness, Kirkcudbright, Lanark, Orkney, Renfrew, Ross and Cromarty, Shetland, Stirling, Sutherland, Wigtown.)
- 437 residing in Division 8. (Ireland.)

10

Total 2,251

The Committee made full use of the reports of previous Commissions and Committees, such as the Royal Commissions on Agricultural Depression (1880–82 and 1895–97), the Gold and Silver Commission (1887–88), &c., and as these previous inquiries went exhaustively into such questions as land tenure, rating, monetary standards, &c., it has not been thought necessary to go over the same ground in the present report.

For the purpose of this report, we have also thought it convenient, in placing the results of our inquiry before the Commission, to divide them under the following heads :—

- (A) Agricultural Policy before 1846.
- (B) Agriculture in the Nineteenth Century.
- (C) International conditions.
- (D) Recent Agricultural conditions in the United Kingdom.
- (E) Imports of Agricultural Produce and their relation to the Home Production.
- (F) Experiences of Farmers.
- (G) Conclusions and Remedial Measures.

11

(A)—AGRICULTURAL POLICY BEFORE 1846.

The encouragement of agriculture was until comparatively recent times the central feature of a policy the objects of which were national strength and security, the increase of employment and the provision of a “plentiful subsistence” for the people. The so-called “Corn Laws” formed only one group amongst the various measures which were adopted for the promotion of agriculture, and these again were closely related to the industrial and commercial legislation, the Navigation Laws, the Poor Law and other laws, which together constituted the national or mercantile system. This system, so far as it can be said to have been defined, was intended to be a mean between extreme regulation on the one hand, and the policy of *laissez-faire* on the other. Although, as a matter of fact, a complicated series of discriminating duties was adopted in the course of several generations, import and export duties and other regulations were based not on principle, but on grounds of expediency, and were accompanied with the removal of innumerable restrictions both on internal and external trade, and the equalisation of conditions within Great Britain in the first instance, and then the United Kingdom. This system, moreover, was consistent with and, in fact, required the maintenance and extension of private enterprise in all directions, but subject to national regulations. Under this historic policy agriculture in all its branches made great progress; at the end of the seventeenth century home-grown corn provided for the entire population which was then about 5½ millions¹, and

**Character of British
Agricultural Policy
and its General
Results**

12

¹ For England and Wales.

left a little over for exportation; in the period 1831-35, home-grown supplies provided food for 96% of the population, or for nearly 24 million persons, at lower prices than were reached again for nearly 40 years.

Restraints on Exportation and Importation

The Corn Laws date back to the Middle Ages¹, but the effective development of this legislation began under the Tudors. An Act passed in 1554² imposed penalties for exporting corn when wheat was more than 6s. 8d. a quarter; rye, 4s.; and barley, 3s. The scale of prices at which exportation might take place was raised, and other restraints on the exportation or importation of corn were modified by several Acts passed in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I. and Charles I., and under the Protectorate.³ The storing of corn in public granaries, sales by public authorities, and other expedients for dealing with times of scarcity were also adopted at this period. With the termination of the Civil War, great and increasing attention was given to agriculture and improvements in the methods of agriculture gradually extended. At the Restoration, Cromwell's Act was re-enacted.⁴ Exportation was permitted when wheat was not more than 40s. a quarter; rye, beans and pease, 24s.; barley and malt, 20s.; oats, 16s.; beef, £5 a barrel; pork, £6 10s. a barrel; bacon, 6d. a lb.; butter, £4 10s. a barrel; cheese, 30s. the hundred. Three years later a much more elaborate Act⁵ was passed, allowing exportation when wheat was not more than 48s. a quarter, and other grain, &c., in proportion, and regulating the duties on the importation of corn and cattle. This Act also abolished restrictions on the buying and selling of corn in open market when prices did not exceed stipulated rates⁶.

Bounties on Exportation

A change of great importance in the policy of England with regard to corn took place in 1672, bounties on exportation being granted when prices did not exceed certain rates. This system was established by an Act "for the encouraging the exportation of corn,"⁷ which came into operation in 1689. This Act provided for the payment of 5s. a quarter on the exportation of wheat when the price did not exceed 48s. a quarter; 3s. 6d. on rye when the price did not exceed 32s.; and 2s. 6d. on barley or malt when the price did not exceed 24s. Frequently suspended, modified in 1773 and repealed in 1814, this Act was the subject of much controversy while it was in operation, and has been much debated since its repeal. It has been maintained on the one hand that the Corn Bounty of 1689 was the main cause of the great improvement in agriculture which subsequently took place; on the other, that it was of no advantage to the farmer or the landowner; and that the price of corn might have been lower and the value of land higher if there had been no bounty. But the gradual alteration of conditions, by which Great Britain was converted from an exporting country into a country dependent on importation for most of its food supplies, has determined the whole course of British policy in regard to agriculture.

The Change in Conditions from 1689-1773

The seventeenth century, throughout which there had been great fluctuations in the price of corn and provisions, and great variations in one district as compared with another, ended with a succession of bad seasons. The years 1693-1700 were known as "the seven barren years of the seventeenth century," and of the 23 seasons from 1693 to 1715, 11 were more or less deficient in produce.⁸ But in the period 1715-1765 prices were on the whole low; there was much prosperity;

¹ Corn was exported from England in the Middle Ages. But this was sometimes prohibited or confined to particular ports. 7 R. II., c. 7 (1393) allowed all English subjects to export corn. This was modified by 15 H. VI., c. 2 (1436), which provided that corn might be exported without licence when wheat was at 6s. 8d. a quarter, barley at 3s. 3 Ed. IV., c. 2 (1463) restrained the importation of corn until it should exceed certain prices. The same principles are found in many Acts of Parliament up to the nineteenth century.

² 1 & 2 Ph. & M., c. 5.

³ 5 Eliz. c. 5, § 24 (1562), "An Act touching Politick Constitutions for the Navy"; 13 Eliz. c. 13 (1570), "An Act for the increase of tillage and maintenance of the Navy"; 2 Jac. I., c. 25 (1604); 3 Jac. I., c. 11 (1605); 21 Jac. I., c. 28, §§ 3, 4 (1623); 3 Car. I., c. 4, § 24 (1627); Scobell's Acts, § 375; Burton's *Cromwellian Diary*, I., xlix., lx., lxxxv.

⁴ 12 Car. II., c. 4, § 1 (1660).

⁵ 15 Car. II., c. 7 (1663).

⁶ 15 Car. II., c. 7 (1663). See also 22 Car. II., c. 13; 1 Jac. II., c. 19; 2 W. & M., c. 4, §§ 3, 4; 1 Ann., stat. 1, c. 13, § 2; 9 Ann., c. 6, § 2; 8 G. I., c. 7.

⁷ 25 Car. II., c. 1.

⁸ 1 W. & M., c. 12.

⁹ 10 W. III., c. 3 (1699), prohibited the exportation of corn, malt, meal, flour, bread, biscuit and starch for one year. 10 & 11 W. III., c. 4, prohibited the excessive distilling of spirits and low wines from corn, &c. 11 W. III., c. 1, suspended the bounty for one year. But 11 & 12 W. III., c. 20 (1700), "for the greater encouragement of tillage," removed the export duties on wheat and other grain, meal, bread and biscuit. 8 Ann., c. 2, prohibited "the exportation of corn, malt, meal, flour, bread, biscuit and starch, and low wines, spirits, worts, and wash drawn from malted corn."

and a great improvement took place in the standard of comfort of the poorer classes.¹ A series of bad harvests began with the year 1765, those of 1770–1774 being especially deficient, and with this change from plenty to dearth the country entered on a period of rapid and arbitrary changes in policy which tended to accentuate the distress which followed the rise of prices. The bounties were suspended,² exportation was prohibited, and free importation was permitted, at first from the North American Colonies and then from any part of Europe.³ In 1773⁴ an elaborate attempt was made to devise a “permanent law” with “such general rules and provisions as might render, for the time to come, such temporary laws unnecessary, would afford encouragement to the farmer, be the means of increasing the growth of that necessary commodity, and of affording a cheaper and more constant supply to the poor, and preventing abuse in that article of trade.” According to this Act, when wheat was at or above 48s. a quarter; rye, pease and beans, 32s.; barley, beer or bigg, 24s.; oats, 16s.; wheat might be imported on payment of a duty of 6d. a quarter, and other grain at stated lower duties. When wheat was above 44s.; rye, pease and beans, 28s.; barley, &c., 22s.; and oats 14s. exportation was prohibited, and below these prices the following bounties on exportation were to be given:—5s. on wheat and malt made of wheat; 3s. on rye; 2s. 6d. on barley and malt made of barley, &c.; 2s. on oats; and 2s. 6d. on oatmeal per quarter of 276 lbs. avoirdupois. The bounty on pease, beans and oats was new. The next few years brought lower prices, and in “the ever memorable year 1779” the crop was a quarter above the average. But with the rise of prices much new land had been taken into cultivation, and the fall of prices brought much agricultural distress. The number of Inclosure Bills fell from 193 in the three years 1772–4 to 54 in 1781–3. But 1784 and 1785 were bad winters, with great scarcity and high price of food for animals. These years were followed by a burst of prosperity, to be followed by scarcity in 1789, great abundance in 1791, and an extremely wet summer in 1792. The constant and violent changes in the character of the harvests were followed by legislative changes almost as arbitrary.⁵ The Corn Law of 1791⁶ consisted of no less than 94 clauses, and was intended to revise and amend existing laws and place the policy of the country on

Suspension of the
Bounties, and Free
Importation

The Act of 1773

The Corn Laws
of 1791.

¹ But the exportation of corn and other grain, and provisions, was prohibited by 14 G. II., c. 3 (1741). There were also several Acts suspending the bounty, prohibiting exportation, and adopting other remedies for scarcity from 1756 to 1758. See 30 G. II., cc. 7, 9, 10, 14, 15; 31 G. II., c. 1; 32 G. II., c. 1; 33 G. II., cc. 4, 9. Importation of salted beef, pork, and butter from Ireland was permitted by 31 G. II., c. 28, and subsequent Acts. The prohibition of the export of corn and other grain was taken off by 32 G. II., c. 8.

² On the effect of the bounty upon wheat prices between 1715–1765, Tooke says:—“While there appears to be no sufficient grounds for the opinion of Dr. Adam Smith that the bounty had the effect of raising the price in that interval there seems to be as little ground for ascribing to that measure such encouragement to an extension of cultivation, as to have had the effect of sensibly reducing the price. But there is a further difficulty in ascribing to the bounty the remarkable cheapness of that period, compared with the period immediately preceding, or succeeding and that is, that a similar degree of relative cheapness prevailed in France, as will appear by the following statement extracted from the margins of Garnier’s translation of Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*.

PRICES OF THE SEPTIER OF WHEAT IN FRANCE (PARIS MEASURE).

	fr.	cts.
1706–15	29	5
1716–25	17	1
1726–35	15	46
1736–45	18	80
1756–65	17	64
1766–75	28	5

This degree of cheapness, be it observed, took place under a system of Corn Laws, the very reverse of that which prevailed in this country, the exportation thence being absolutely prohibited. Accordingly, while the low prices in this country were, by the advocates for the county, ascribed to our *encouragement* of exportation, a similar depression of prices in France was, by most French writers, attributed to the discouragement of exportation, and to the occasional encouragement of importation.”—*History of Prices*, I., p. 52.

See also Adam Smith:—“In France, till 1764, the exportation of grain was by law prohibited; and it is somewhat difficult to suppose, that nearly the same diminution of price which took place in one country, notwithstanding this prohibition, should in another be owing to the extraordinary encouragement given to exportation.”—*Wealth of Nations*, vol. i., chap xi.

³ On the suspension of the bounties, see 5 G. III., c. 31; on the prohibition of export, see the series of Acts from 5 G. III., c. 32 to 13 G. III., c. 3; on free importation, see 5 G. III., c. 31; and the series of Acts from 6 G. III., c. 3, to 13 G. III., c. 5. The free importation of salted beef, pork, bacon and butter from Ireland and the American Colonies and of cattle from Ireland was made perpetual by 16 G. III., c. 8.

⁴ 13 G. III., c. 43, “An Act to regulate the Importation and Exportation of Corn.”

⁵ The following are the principal measures between 1773 and 1791:—23 G. III., c. 1, permitting the importation of wheat and other grain and meal upon payment of the low duties therein mentioned, for a limited time: *ib.* c. 9, free importation for a limited time of rice, Indian corn, and meal; *ib.* c. 53, measures for dealing with the failure of last year’s crop; *ib.* c. 81, preventing the exportation of corn, &c., with a bounty; 29 G. III., c. 58, for better regulating and ascertaining the importation and exportation of grain; 30 G. III., c. 1, indemnity in connection with Orders in Council; 30 G. III., c. 42, and 31 G. III., c. 4, exportation and prohibition of importation.

⁶ 31 G. III., c. 30, “An Act for regulating the Importation and Exportation of Corn, and the payment of the Duty on Foreign Corn imported, and of the Bounty on British Corn Exported.”

a new basis. It provided that it should "henceforth be lawful to buy the several sorts of corn to sell again and to lay it up in granaries, whatever the price thereof may be," and regulated the bounties to be paid on exportation when wheat should be under 44s. a quarter; rye, 28s.; barley, &c., 22s.; and oats, 14s. The duties to be paid on importation were 24s. 3d. a quarter on wheat when the price should be under 50s.; 2s. 6d. when the price was between 50s. and 54s.; and 6d. when the price was above 54s.; with corresponding scales of duty for meal and flour, rye, barley, oats, &c. In 1792 the price of corn fell to 41s. 9d., "and a considerable quantity was shipped abroad; but this was the last occasion on which our farmers found relief in foreign markets for an over-abundant stock of grain."¹ The bounty thus practically ceased to be operative. Moreover, this Corn Law, as it concerned import duties, was inoperative, because the price of corn was almost always above the price at which any more than the nominal duty of 6d. became payable. The bounties paid on the exportation of all kinds of grain, pease, beans, &c., amounted to £76,802 in 1792, and fell to £5,796 in 1794, and to £25 in 1795². The following table shows the amount of wheat imported and exported in each of the years 1791-1820. The figures are taken from "Customs Tariffs of the United Kingdom, 1800-1897 (C. 8,706)":—

Table 1

TABLE 1.—QUANTITIES OF WHEAT AND WHEAT FLOUR IMPORTED INTO GREAT BRITAIN, 1791-1820.

	Imported.	Exported.	Excess of Imports.		Imported.	Exported.	Excess of Imports.
	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>		<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>
1791	469,056	70,626	398,430	1806.. ..	310,342	19,566	280,776
1792	22,417	300,278	277,861 ³	1807.. ..	404,946	25,113	379,833
1793	490,398	76,869	413,529	1808.. ..	84,889	98,005	13,116 ³
1794	327,902	155,048	172,854	1809.. ..	455,987	31,278	424,709
1795	313,793	18,839	294,954	1810.. ..	1,567,126	75,785	1,491,341
1796	879,200	24,679	854,521	1811.. ..	336,131	97,765	238,566
1797	461,767	54,525	407,242	1812.. ..	290,710	46,325	244,385
1798	396,721	59,782	336,939	1813.. ..	559,000	Records destroyed.	—
1799	463,185	39,362	423,823	1814.. ..	852,567	111,477	741,090
1800	1,264,520	22,013	1,242,507	1815.. ..	384,475	227,947	156,528
1801	1,424,765	28,406	1,396,359	1816.. ..	332,491	121,611	210,880
1802	647,663	149,304	498,359	1817.. ..	1,089,855	317,524	772,331
1803	373,725	76,580	297,145	1818.. ..	1,694,261	58,668	1,635,593
1804	461,140	63,073	398,067	1819.. ..	625,638	44,689	580,949
1805	920,834	77,955	842,879	1820.. ..	996,479	94,657	901,822

In 1795 the average price of wheat rose to 75s. 2d. and in 1796 to 78s. 7d. The average price for the ten years 1790 to 1799 was 57s. 7d. In 1800 the price of wheat rose to 113s. 10d. and in 1801 to 119s. 6d., and the average for the ten years, 1800 to 1809, was 84s. 8d. In the next period the price continued to rise until 1812, when it reached 126s. 6d. This, however, was the maximum point. Throughout this period of excessive prices the Corn Laws were practically inoperative, yet corn did not come in. Nor was this all. The Government not only prohibited exportation and suspended the bounties—when as a matter of fact there was no surplus to export—but granted bounties on importation.⁴ But they had little effect. The sum paid amounted to £573,418 in 1796, £28,565 in 1797 and £455 in 1798, £16 in 1799 and £44,837 in 1800, when the average prices of wheat were 78s. 7d., 53s. 9d., 51s. 10d., 69s., 113s. 10d., respectively. The measures of the Government, by advertising the scarcity, arousing the fears of the people and playing into the hands of speculators, in all probability aggravated the rise of prices.⁵

¹ Porter's *Progress of the Nation* (1847), p. 147.

² Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iv., p. 532.

³ In these years the exports exceeded the imports. In 1792, when there was a plentiful harvest, the average price fell to 43s. a quarter. At this price the export of wheat was permitted, and the question of the bounty of 5s. a quarter led to the large exportation of that year. In 1808 the average price was 81s. 4d. a quarter, and inasmuch as under the Act of 1864 the exportation of wheat was prohibited when the price was above 54s., the exportation of 1808 must have consisted of supplies to troops serving abroad.

⁴ On the prohibitions of exportation and analogous measures, see 36 G. III, cc. 3, 6; 37 G. III, c. 7; 38 G. III, c. 10; 39 G. III, c. 87; 39 & 40 G. III, cc. 9, 58; 41 G. III, cc. 1, 2, 4; 41 G. III, c. 36 (U.K.); 42 G. III, c. 13. For the bounties on importation, see 36 G. III, cc. 21, 56; 37 G. III, c. 7; 39 & 40 G. III, cc. 29, 35, 53; 41 G. III, c. 10; 41 G. III, c. 34 (U.K.). There were many other Acts dealing with the scarcity such as those prohibiting the use of wheat in distilling, the manufacture of starch, &c.

⁵ Cf. Arthur Young's observations on the effect of the action of the French Government, in his chapter on the Police of Corn (*Travels in France during 1787, 1788, and 1789*, 2nd Edition, Vol. i., pp. 488-498).

In Ireland pasture and dairy farming greatly increased during the eighteenth century and there was a considerable export trade. But tillage declined, partly because the economic and political conditions of Ireland were more favourable to the development of the former, partly through the operation of the English Corn Laws which imposed high duties on importation and granted bounties on exportation. Thus, during the period of low prices in England, 1715 to 1765, Irish farmers had no chance of exporting corn to England while the Irish market was flooded with cheap English corn. Small bounties, granted on exportation by the Irish Parliament in 1708 and 1756, had no effect. In 1756 bounties were granted on the inland carriage of corn to Dublin, and in 1767 on the carriage of corn coastwise to Dublin. In 1773 the bounties on exportation were increased, but the real opportunity of Ireland came with the rise of prices and the increase of population in England and the gradual extinction of England as an exporting country. After 1773, a flourishing corn export trade from Ireland to England grew up, and was probably considerably aided by the Corn Laws adopted in 1784. "Corn mills sprang up everywhere, and the corn trade increased enormously." The sixth article of the Act of Union¹ contained the proviso "that nothing herein shall extend to take away any duty, bounty or prohibition which exists with respect to corn, meal, malt, flour or biscuit; but that all duties, bounties or prohibitions on the said articles, may be regulated, varied or repealed, from time to time, as the United Parliament shall deem expedient." But in 1806² "all bounties and duties payable on the exportation and importation of corn, grain, malt, meal, flour and biscuit respectively, from Great Britain to Ireland, and from Ireland to Great Britain" were abolished. Ireland thus enjoyed a substantial preference in the markets of Great Britain over all British Colonies and foreign countries, a condition of affairs which lasted until the repeal of the Corn Laws. During the high prices which prevailed during the French war, Irish agriculture profited considerably.³

In 1810 the prohibition of the exportation of corn and the free importation of corn and provisions were further continued⁴, and in 1813 a select committee was appointed "to inquire into the Corn Trade." This committee profoundly influenced the future of British agriculture. In the first place, as the result of its inquiry, resolutions were introduced and passed in the House of Commons in favour of the repeal of the Corn Bounty, free exportation and a graduated scale of duties on the importation of corn. Two bills were introduced to give effect to these resolutions, one for regulating the importation of corn, and the other for repealing the bounty. But only the latter passed.⁵ Other committees sat in 1814, and in 1815, an Act "to amend the laws now in force for regulating the importation of corn" was passed.⁶ By this Act, corn might at all times be imported and warehoused, and taken out of warehouse and exported. Corn might be freely imported and entered for home consumption when wheat was at or above 80s.; rye, pease and beans, 53s.; barley, &c., 40s.; and oats, 27s. A preference, however, was given to corn from the British Colonies of North America, the free importation prices being fixed at 67s., 44s., 33s., and 22s. respectively. The average prices of wheat and the quantities imported from 1815 to 1822 were as follows:—

TABLE 2.—AVERAGE PRICES OF WHEAT AND QUANTITIES IMPORTED INTO GREAT BRITAIN FOR HOME CONSUMPTION—1815–1822.

Year.	Price. ⁷	Quantity Imported. ⁸	Year.	Price. ⁷	Quantity Imported. ⁸
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>		<i>s. d.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>
1815	63 8 ..	156,528	1819	72 3 ..	580,949
1816	76 2 ..	210,880	1820	65 10 ..	901,822
1817	94 0 ..	772,331	1821	54 5 ..	507,538
1818	83 8 ..	1,639,593	1822	43 3 ..	350,103

Throughout this period, although the importation of wheat was absolutely free, or (except in the year 1822) subject to a nominal duty of 6d. a quarter, no considerable quantity was imported.⁹

¹ 39 & 40 G. III, c. 67.

² 46 G. III, sess. 1, c. 97; 47 G. III, sess. 1, c. 7.

³ For the history of Irish agriculture and the Irish Corn Laws during the eighteenth century, see A. E. Murray's *History of the Commercial and Financial Relations between England and Ireland*. (P. S. King & Son.)

⁴ 50 G. III, c. 19. Other statutes bearing directly on the consumption of corn were 49 G. III, cc. 7, 31; 50 G. III, cc. 5, 16; 52 G. III, cc. 3, 45, 47, 48, 127; 53 G. III, cc. 2, 7, 23.

⁵ 54 G. III, c. 69.

⁶ 55 G. III, c. 26.

⁷ Official Gazette Prices.

⁸ The figures in this column are official. According to Porter, *Progress of the Nation*, p. 137, "the imports into the United Kingdom (Great Britain and Ireland) for the above years are:—

	<i>Qrs.</i>		<i>Qrs.</i>
1815	—	1819	122,153
1816	225,263	1820	34,274
1817	1,020,949	1821	2
1818	1,593,518	1822	—

⁹ Free importation irrespective of 55 G. III, c. 26, was also permitted by 57 G. III, c. 85, until Nov. 14, 1817

The Irish Corn Laws

25

Irish Bounties

Foster's Corn Laws in 1784

26

Free Trade between Great Britain and Ireland

The Corn Law Committee of 1813

Repeal of the Corn Bounty

27

The Corn Law of 1815

Table 2

28

But the Corn Law Committee of 1813 immediately influenced legislation and the economists of the period generalised on the evidence of witnesses before the Committee, and based upon it a law of "diminishing returns."¹ On this generalisation rest not only the theory of rent and modern theories of the incidence of corn duties and the results of free importation, but the whole fabric built by the classical economists. There can, however, be no doubt that produce per head of the population was increasing throughout the period under review.²

The Corn Law of 1822

Another Committee on the Corn Trade sat in 1821, and in the following year a further Act was passed "to amend the laws relating to the importation of corn."³ In this Act there was a further differentiation of duties on a graduated scale with the object of relieving agriculture in the distress caused by the fall of prices. Thus, when wheat was under 80s. there was to be a duty of 12s., with an additional duty of 5s. during the first 3 months. When the price was between 80s. and 85s. the duty was to be 5s., with an additional duty of 5s. during the first 3 months. When the price was at or above 85s. the duty was to be 1s. Similar arrangements were made for flour, other grain than wheat, pease, beans, &c., with a preference in each case for corn imported from the British Colonies in North America.⁴ But in 1825 the entry of warehoused corn for home consumption and the importation of Colonial corn on payment of a moderate duty of 5s. irrespective of prices were allowed, and there followed Acts of Parliament and Orders in Council which further modified the Corn Law. Resolutions passed the House of Commons in 1827 that foreign corn might always be imported free of duty in order to be warehoused, and for home consumption on the payment of certain duties to be made to vary equally. A Bill on these lines was abandoned on the passing of the Duke of Wellington's amendment that there should be no importation until the prices exceeded 66s. In 1828, however, a further amendment of the Corn Laws took place.⁵ This Act established an elaborate scale of duties, ranging, for wheat, from 24s. 8d. when the price was 62s. and under to 1s. when the price was over 73s. Similar scales were worked out for other grain, flour and meal, with a preference to the British Colonies of North America or elsewhere out of Europe. The prices of wheat and the quantities imported during this period were as follows:—

The Corn Law of 1828

31 Table 3

TABLE 3.—AVERAGE PRICES OF WHEAT AND QUANTITIES IMPORTED INTO GREAT BRITAIN FOR HOME CONSUMPTION, 1823—1836.

Year.	Price.	Quantity imported.	Year.	Price.	Quantity imported.
	s. d.	Qrs.		s. d.	Qrs.
1823 ..	51 9	278,068	1830 ..	64 3	2,168,602
1824 ..	62 0	379,911	1831 ..	66 4	2,801,985
1825 ..	66 6	748,810	1832 ..	58 8	964,793
1826 ..	56 11	877,073	1833 ..	52 11	1,070,245
1827 ..	56 9	654,545	1834 ..	46 2	822,004
1828 ..	60 5	1,333,811	1835 ..	39 4	616,732
1829 ..	66 3	2,114,998	1836 ..	48 6	604,178

¹ The following is John Stuart Mill's description of the law of diminishing returns:—"After a certain, and not very advanced, stage in the progress of agriculture; as soon, in fact, as men have applied themselves to cultivation with any energy, and have brought to it any tolerable tools; from that time it is the law of production from the land that in a given state of agricultural skill and knowledge, by increasing the labour the produce is not increased in an equal degree; doubling the labour does not double the produce; or, to express the same thing in other words, every increase of produce is obtained by a more than proportional increase in the application of labour to the land." [1st Ed., vol. i., p. 212; Bk. I., ch. xii., §2. The words from "as soon" to "from that time" were afterwards omitted. People's Ed., p. 103.]

² See Table 6, p. 53.

³ 3 G. IV., c. 60.

⁴ By the Act of 1822 wheat from "British Colonies or Plantations in North America" could be imported when the British price was at or above 59s. a quarter. Wheat from all the other countries could not be imported until the British price reached 70s. a quarter.

⁵ See 6 G. IV., cc. 64, 65; 7 G. IV., c. 70; 9 G. IV., c. 20.

⁶ 9 G. IV., c. 60.

⁷ Porter's figures for Great Britain and Ireland are as follows:—

Year.	Imports.	Year.	Imports.
	Qrs.		Qrs.
1823 ..	12,137	1830 ..	1,701,885
1824 ..	15,777	1831 ..	1,491,631
1825 ..	525,231	1832 ..	325,435
1826 ..	315,892	1833 ..	82,346
1827 ..	572,733	1834 ..	64,653
1828 ..	842,050	1835 ..	28,483
1829 ..	1,364,220	1836 ..	24,826

With the Corn Law of 1828—the only Corn Law which was not suspended or otherwise interfered with by the Government—in complete operation, the price of wheat steadily fell in consequence of the abundance of the harvests, and importation almost ceased. But in 1837 prices rose to 55s. 10d., in 1838 to 64s. 7d., and in 1839 to 70s. 8d.; in 1838 the Anti-Corn Law League was founded, and though prices fell again, agitation for the complete repeal of the Corn Laws was continued. In 1841 the Government brought in a plan for the substitution of a fixed duty for the sliding scale, but on the dissolution of Parliament the Opposition won the General Election. Peel brought in a new Corn Law¹, in which the sliding scale was retained but the duties were reduced. It was, however, quite clear by this time that the Corn Laws could not be maintained, partly because of the general progress of the Free Trade movement, partly because the hostility to repeal was largely disarmed by the wide acceptance of the Free Trade view that the free importation of corn would not affect agricultural interests. The Canada Act of 1843² added impetus to the movement for repeal. In 1842 Canada imposed a duty of 3s. a quarter on wheat imported from any country except the United Kingdom or any British Possession, and in return for this preference Canada asked for the removal or reduction of the duties on wheat and wheat flour imported into the United Kingdom from Canada. Accordingly, importation was made free subject to the nominal duty of 1s. on wheat and an equivalent duty on flour. It was argued, quite erroneously, that in the circumstances of the case this Act was equivalent to granting free importation from the United States, whence corn would come *via* Canadian ports. The potato famine in Ireland merely hastened the repeal of the Corn Laws.³

**Last Stages in
Repeal of the
Corn Laws**

33

**The Corn Law of
1842**

**The Canada Act of
1843**

34

**Repeal of the Corn
Laws**

(B) AGRICULTURE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

It is clear from this historical review that popular ideas as to the operation of the Corn Laws, require revision. They were the result of exaggerated or erroneous statements circulated during the final stages of the repeal agitation, and even to a large extent misrepresented the views of many of the ablest scientific advocates⁴ of repeal. During the period of high prices the Corn Laws were never in complete operation; they were often suspended, and bounties even on importation were given. Yet corn, in any considerable quantities could not be obtained from abroad. While the operation of the Corn Laws, both in the earlier and later periods, was unrestricted, prices rapidly fell. Moreover, even if the Corn Laws had never been suspended, the internal improvements were probably sufficient to counterbalance any duties which could then have been imposed. From the Restoration until the repeal of the Corn Laws, the improvements in methods of cultivation were great and continuous.⁵ Agricultural experts, landlords, farmers, scientific societies vied with each other in introducing better methods, and agriculture was revolutionised. It is certain that the produce of the soil, in wheat alone, was more than quadrupled in the period we have reviewed, new crops were introduced and widely extended. This increase in produce was made incomparably more effective by the improvements in transport and the removal of internal restrictions on trade. The statute book is full of Acts for making or improving roads and canals, and for making rivers navigable, and the cost of transport greatly diminished. In early times there were innumerable restrictions on the buying and selling, and transport of corn. These were gradually removed in the course of the eighteenth century. Free Trade in corn between Great Britain and Ireland followed.

**General View of the
Corn Law Period**

35

**Improvements in
Husbandry**

**Roads, Rivers, and
Canals**

36

**Removal of Internal
Restrictions on
Trade**

Inclosures

No better measure of the rate of improvement can be found than the growth of inclosures,⁶ because this meant the destruction of the old method of husbandry, and the introduction of the rotation of crops and scientific husbandry.

¹ 5 & 6 V., c. 14. But 5 & 6 V., c. 92 (continued by 8 & 9 V., c. 103) permitted wheat to be delivered from the warehouse or the vessel duty free upon the previous substitution of an equivalent quantity of flour or biscuit in the warehouse.

² 6 & 7 V., c. 29.

³ 9 & 10 V., c. 22; 10 & 11 V., 1, 2, 3, 86.

⁴ *e.g.* Ricardo & McCulloch were in favour of the retention of a duty on corn as a permanent part of our fiscal system.

⁵ See Thorold Rogers' *History of Agriculture and Prices*.

⁶ See Tables and Diagrams §§ 37-46.

Table 4

TABLE 4.—NUMBER OF ACTS OF INCLOSURE AND AREAS INCLOSED OF COMMONS AND COMMONABLE LANDS IN EACH THREE-YEAR-PERIOD, 1727-1845.¹

PERIOD.				CLASS I. ²		CLASS II. ³		TOTAL.	
				No. of Acts.	Acres.	No. of Acts.	Acres.	No. of Acts.	Acres.
1727-9	..	..	..	5	10,188	3	10,702	8	20,890
1730-2	..	..	..	12	22,324	4	2,871	16	25,195
1733-5	..	..	..	9	11,229	1	650	10	11,879
1736-8	..	..	..	6	16,811	3	1,808	9	18,619
1739-41	..	..	..	10	16,930	3	3,488	13	20,418
1742-4	..	..	..	13	20,900	4	2,304	17	23,204
1745-7	..	..	..	3	3,729	0	0	3	3,729
1748-50	..	..	..	7	10,881	4	2,112	11	12,993
1751-3	..	..	..	9	13,421	10	17,169	19	30,590
1754-6	..	..	..	23	40,406	7	10,488	30	50,894
1757-9	..	..	..	54	86,734	11	14,923	65	101,657
1760-2	..	..	..	62	113,069	13	13,426	75	126,495
1763-5	..	..	..	94	174,528	23	55,454	117	229,982
1766-8	..	..	..	109	190,651	32	83,729	141	274,380
1769-71	..	..	..	140	240,335	38	55,077	178	295,412
1772-4	..	..	..	153	269,373	40	56,771	193	326,144
1775-7	..	..	..	137	238,034	51	62,079	188	300,113
1778-80	..	..	..	123	199,532	46	42,258	169	241,790
1781-83	..	..	..	32	44,087	22	31,334	54	75,421
1784-6	..	..	..	35	53,312	24	17,852	59	71,164
1787-9	..	..	..	57	92,020	28	36,118	85	128,138
1790-2	..	..	..	66	109,596	28	30,441	94	140,037
1793-5	..	..	..	156	274,354	47	64,672	203	339,026
1796-8	..	..	..	142	245,987	59	59,544	201	305,531
1799-1801	..	..	..	188	322,837	76	149,871	264	472,708
1802-4	..	..	..	169	265,552	84	134,893	253	400,445
1805-7	..	..	..	146	208,545	95	124,516	241	333,061
1808-10	..	..	..	190	287,543	119	161,892	309	449,435
1811-13	..	..	..	195	283,403	169	212,109	364	495,512
1814-16	..	..	..	104	143,583	124	122,820	228	266,403
1817-19	..	..	..	63	67,482	48	38,331	111	105,813
1820-2	..	..	..	39	46,302	38	20,599	77	66,901
1823-5	..	..	..	26	35,450	24	15,953	50	51,403
1826-8	..	..	..	28	49,376	24	20,769	52	70,145
1829-31	..	..	..	29	32,130	23	23,779	52	55,909
1832-4	..	..	..	21	20,343	16	8,457	37	28,800
1835-7	..	..	..	16	13,571	6	15,240	22	28,811
1838-40	..	..	..	32	33,467	18	12,909	50	46,376
1841-3	..	..	..	26	32,715	17	12,985	43	45,700
1844-5	..	..	..	6	5,778	3	9,200	9	14,978

¹ Based on the investigations of Mr. Gilbert Slater, D.Sc., of the London School of Economics, who has analysed all the 4,000 Inclosure Acts from 1727 to 1845. The result of Mr. Slater's investigations is now in course of publication.

² Class I. comprises Acts inclosing common arable fields usually with other commonable lands.

³ Class II. comprises Acts inclosing commons, waste and common pasture only.

The figures in the last two columns of the above table are illustrated in Fig. 1, in which is shown the number of Acts of Inclosure and the areas inclosed in each three-year period from 1727 to 1845. The years corresponding in each case to the middle year of each three-year period.

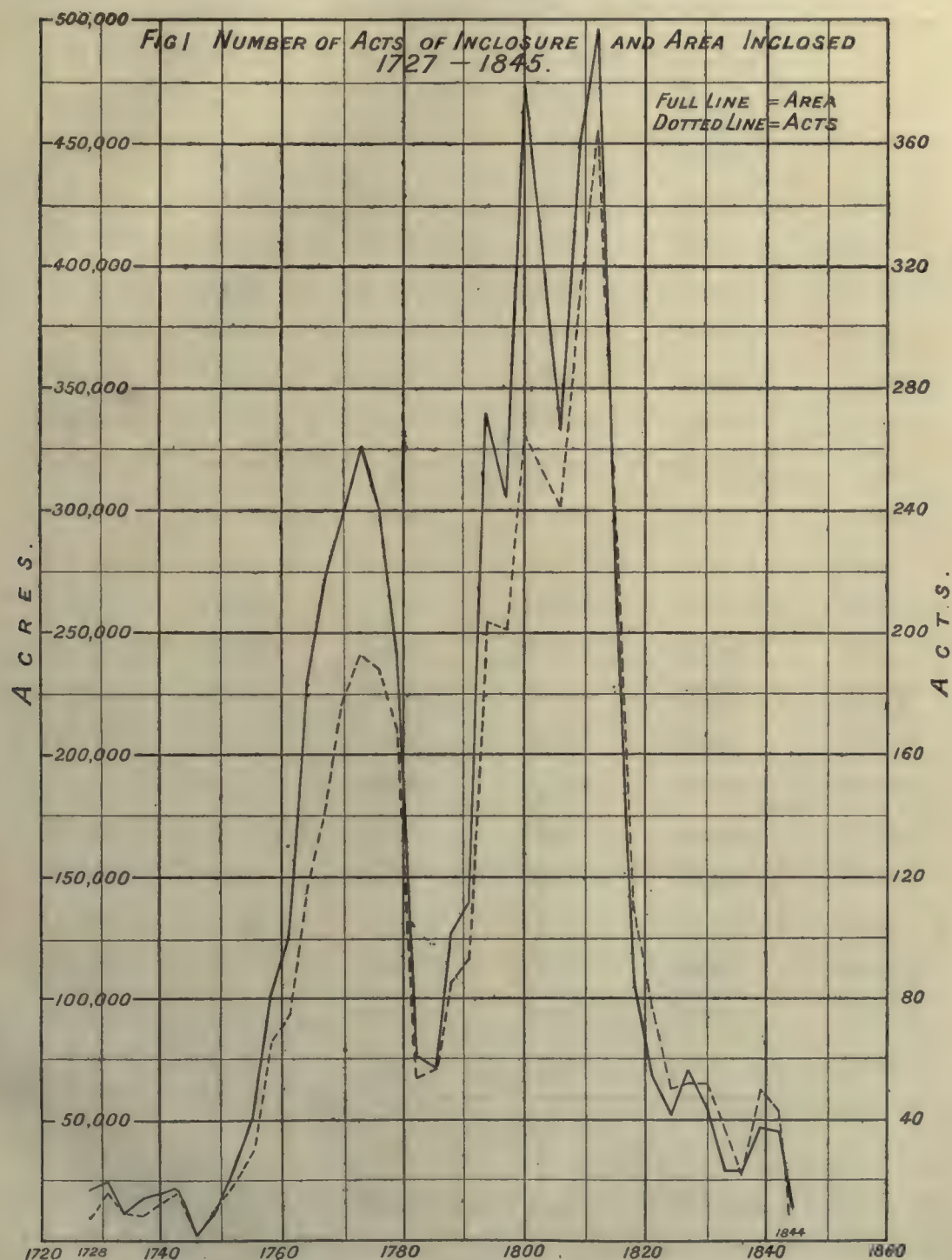


Figure 1

FIG. 1.

Table 5

TABLE 5.—TOTAL AREAS INCLOSED, 1727-1845

	Areas in Years Indicated.	Total to end of Last Year Indicated.		Acres in Years Indicated.	Total to end of Last Year Indicated.
1727-29	20,890 ..	20,890	1787-89	128,138 ..	2,389,107
1730-32	25,195 ..	46,085	1790-92	140,037 ..	2,529,144
1733-35	11,879 ..	57,964	1793-95	339,026 ..	2,868,170
1736-38	18,619 ..	76,583	1796-98	305,531 ..	3,173,701
1739-41	20,418 ..	97,001	1799-1801 ..	472,708 ..	3,646,409
1742-44	23,204 ..	120,205	1802-4	400,445 ..	4,046,854
1745-47	3,729 ..	123,934	1805-7	333,061 ..	4,379,915
1748-50	12,993 ..	136,927	1808-10	449,435 ..	4,829,350
1751-53	30,590 ..	167,517	1811-13	495,512 ..	5,324,862
1754-56	50,894 ..	218,411	1814-16	266,403 ..	5,591,265
1757-59	101,657 ..	320,068	1817-19	105,813 ..	5,697,078
1760-62	126,495 ..	446,563	1820-22	66,901 ..	5,763,979
1763-65	229,982 ..	676,545	1823-25	51,403 ..	5,815,382
1766-68	274,380 ..	950,925	1826-28	70,145 ..	5,885,527
1769-71	295,412 ..	1,246,337	1829-31	55,909 ..	5,941,436
1772-74	326,144 ..	1,572,481	1832-34	28,800 ..	5,970,236
1775-77	300,113 ..	1,872,594	1835-37	28,811 ..	5,999,047
1778-80	241,790 ..	2,114,384	1838-40	46,376 ..	6,045,423
1781-83	75,421 ..	2,189,805	1841-43	45,700 ..	6,091,123
1784-86	71,164 ..	2,260,969	1844-45	14,978 ..	6,106,101

In Fig. 2 another view of the progress of inclosure of cultivable lands is obtained. Starting with 1727 the total acreage inclosed up to the end of any given year is shown by the height of the curve for that year. It is seen that but for a break in 1780 and extending to 1793, the rate of inclosure was steady and continuous up to about 1815.

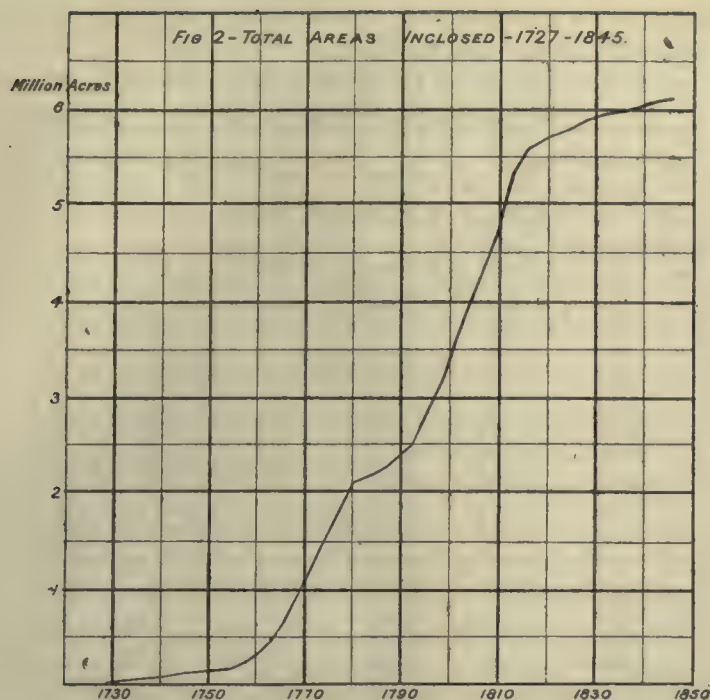


Figure 2

FIG 2.

It is sometimes said that the high prices were the result of the growth of population. This hypothesis, however, was dismissed as untenable by Tooke,¹ who pointed out the absolute impossibility of accounting for the actual violent fluctuations of prices by this method. The growth of production on an average of years more than kept pace with the growth of population. The reasons for the high prices appear to have been (i) the frequent recurrence of bad seasons; (ii) currency changes, especially the suspension of cash payments by the Bank of England in 1797; (iii) interruptions of trade due to the prevalence of a state of war; (iv) the panic legislation and Orders in Council of the Government, which aggravated the violence of the fluctuations of prices; (v) the impossibility of securing steadiness of prices by importation, owing to the fact that, in the condition of transport which prevailed, corn in sufficient quantities at reasonable prices could not be imported.

Until the repeal of the Corn Laws, England was practically independent of foreign supplies of food, and this condition had been maintained from early times, notwithstanding the great increase in population. The number of persons fed on home-grown wheat reached its maximum in the period 1841-1845, when it was no less than 24,000,000 out of a total population of 26,800,000. Imports of wheat and wheat flour rose from 2.92 million cwts. in 1831-1835 to 6.91 million cwts. in 1836-1840, and to 8.28 million cwts. in 1841-1845, and since that period there has been a continuous and rapid increase of imports, and a corresponding decline in the percentage of the population and the actual numbers fed on home-grown wheat. This number fell from the 24,000,000 of the period 1841-1845 to 4,500,000 in 1901-1905, a decline of no less than 81½% in fifty years. In other words, in the period 1891-1895 about the same amount of wheat was produced as at the end of the seventeenth century, before any considerable improvements had taken place. The percentage of the population and the numbers fed on

The Growth of Population

Reasons for the High Prices

Number of Persons Fed on Home-grown Supplies at a Maximum

Decline of Agriculture since the Repeal of the Corn Laws

¹ See Tooke's *History of Prices*, vol. i.

home supplies rose in the next period, but not so as to affect in any way the general course of the movement, which is shown in the following table :—

Table 6

TABLE 6.—IMPORTS OF WHEAT AND FLOUR AND ESTIMATED POPULATION FED FROM HOME-GROWN WHEAT, 1831-1900.

Period.	Imports (million cwt.).			Total Value. million £	Population. millions.	Imports per head.		Estimated Population fed from Home-grown Corn.*	
	Wheat.	Flour.	Wheat and Flour.			Cwts.	£	percent.	millions.
1831-35	2.30	.45	2.92	2.12	24.6	.119	.0862	96.0	23.6
1836-40	5.63	.69	6.91	5.32	25.9	.267	.206	90.4	23.4
1841-45	6.96	.95	8.28	5.48	26.8	.308	.204	89.55	24.0
1846-50	12.35	3.68	17.48	7.49	27.1	.644	.276	78.45	21.4
1851-55	15.50	3.87	20.88	13.18	27.6	.755	.477	74.4	20.6
1856-60	18.75	3.68	23.87	14.92	28.5	.837	.522	71.9	20.5
1861-65	27.90	5.40	35.40	18.81	29.6	1.196	.636	59.4	17.6
1866-70	31.81	4.37	37.75	22.63	30.9	1.224	.732	58.4	18.0
1871-75	43.76	5.39	50.49	30.95	32.4	1.56	.956	48.0	15.6
1876-80	52.69	8.49	63.31	36.42	34.2	1.85	1.065	37.2	12.7
1881-85	58.87	14.34	77.28	38.65	35.6	2.17	1.085	26.4	9.4
1886-90	55.90	16.02	77.79	30.55	37.1	2.09	.824	29.0	10.8
1891-95	69.71	19.35	96.58	32.91	38.5	2.51	.856	15.2	5.8
1896-1900	66.66	21.10	95.97	33.59	40.3	2.38	.834	19.1	7.7
1901-1905	86.85	17.85	111.65	38.39	42.4	2.54	.905	10.6	4.5*

* Assuming throughout average per capita consumption of wheat=5.5 bushels=2.946 cwt.

From 1858 onwards values are declared values. Previous to 1858 values are calculated by multiplying total quantity by Gazette prices.

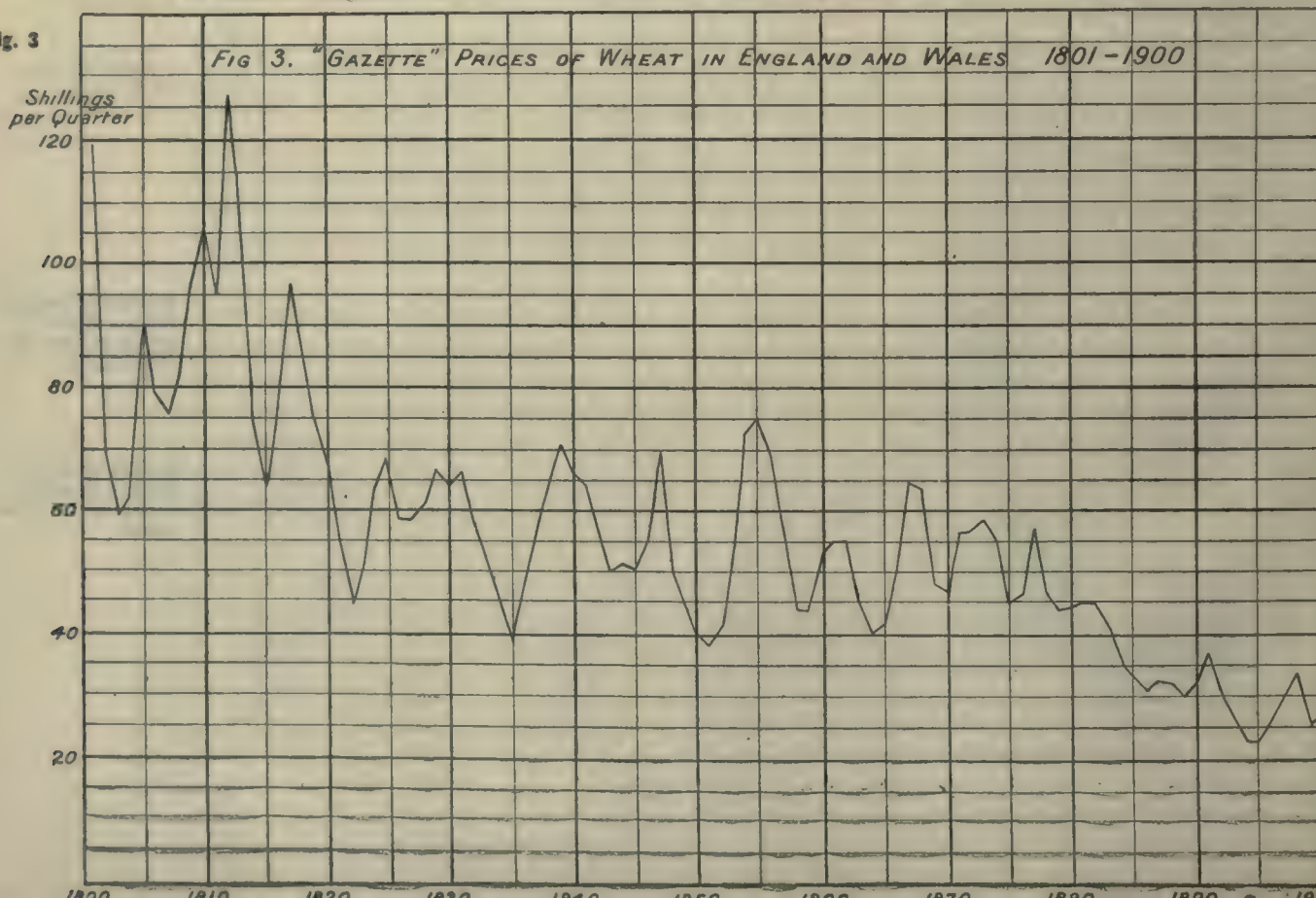
From 1870 wheat and grain equivalent figures are taken from Food Supply Commission Report.

Before 1870 it is assumed that 72 lbs. of flour=100 lbs. of grain.

The Course of Prices

The course of prices, however, since the repeal of the Corn Laws has been very different from that of the other factors dealt with in the last table. Taking first the actual Gazette prices of wheat in England and Wales from 1801-1900 (see Fig. 3), we see that the price reached a

Fig. 3



maximum of 123s. a quarter in 1812. It then fell rapidly, with occasional fluctuations, until in 1835 it was below 40s. During all this period the Corn Laws which have been described in the previous section were in force, and remained so for eleven years after the minimum of 1835. But the repeal of the Corn Laws did not bring low prices. From 1835 to 1884, a period of nearly fifty years, the price of wheat was only in one year below 40s., and during most of the period was considerably above that level. Comparing this diagram with the previous table, we see that when more than 23,000,000 of the population were fed on home-grown supplies and the Corn Laws were in force, the price was no higher than when only 12,000,000 were fed on home-grown and 22,000,000 on foreign supplies and free importation had been the rule for forty years. It appears therefore that up to 1884 the net result of the change of policy had been to make the country dependent on foreign sources for its food supply, without securing lower prices for consumers. In other words the price of wheat when 65 per cent. of the requirements was imported was the same as when only 4 per cent. was imported. Moreover, this process was necessarily accompanied by the depopulation of the rural districts, the sacrifice of generations of improvement, the destruction of agricultural capital, and the loss of an immense number of subsidiary industries.

The great fall of wheat prices began in 1876, the price falling below 40s. in 1884. But, as we shall show, the fall during the last thirty years is not peculiar to the United Kingdom but is general, and is not due to the repeal of the Corn Laws. We can see the general course of wheat prices more clearly if we get rid of the fluctuations due to temporary causes by taking the 11-yearly average for each year (see Fig. 4). We then find that from 1812 until 1848 there was a great fall; then for thirty years prices were at much the same level, showing, if anything, a tendency upwards; then a rapid fall during the last thirty years. The movement during the last thirty years has extended to the whole of Europe.

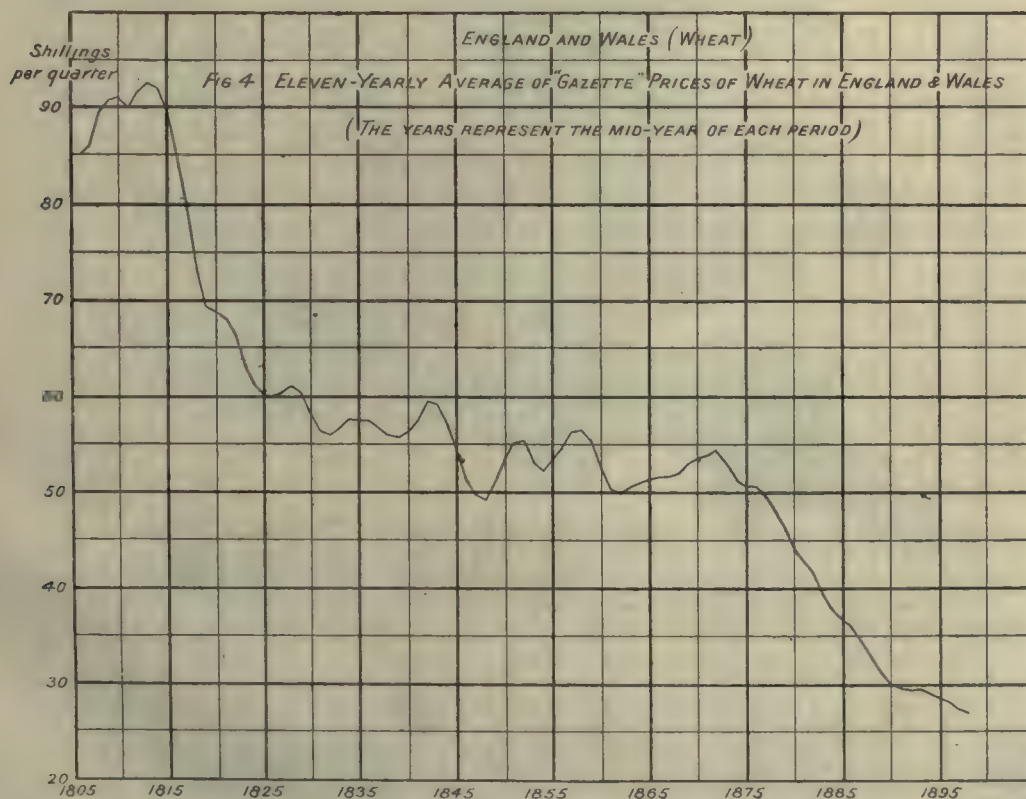
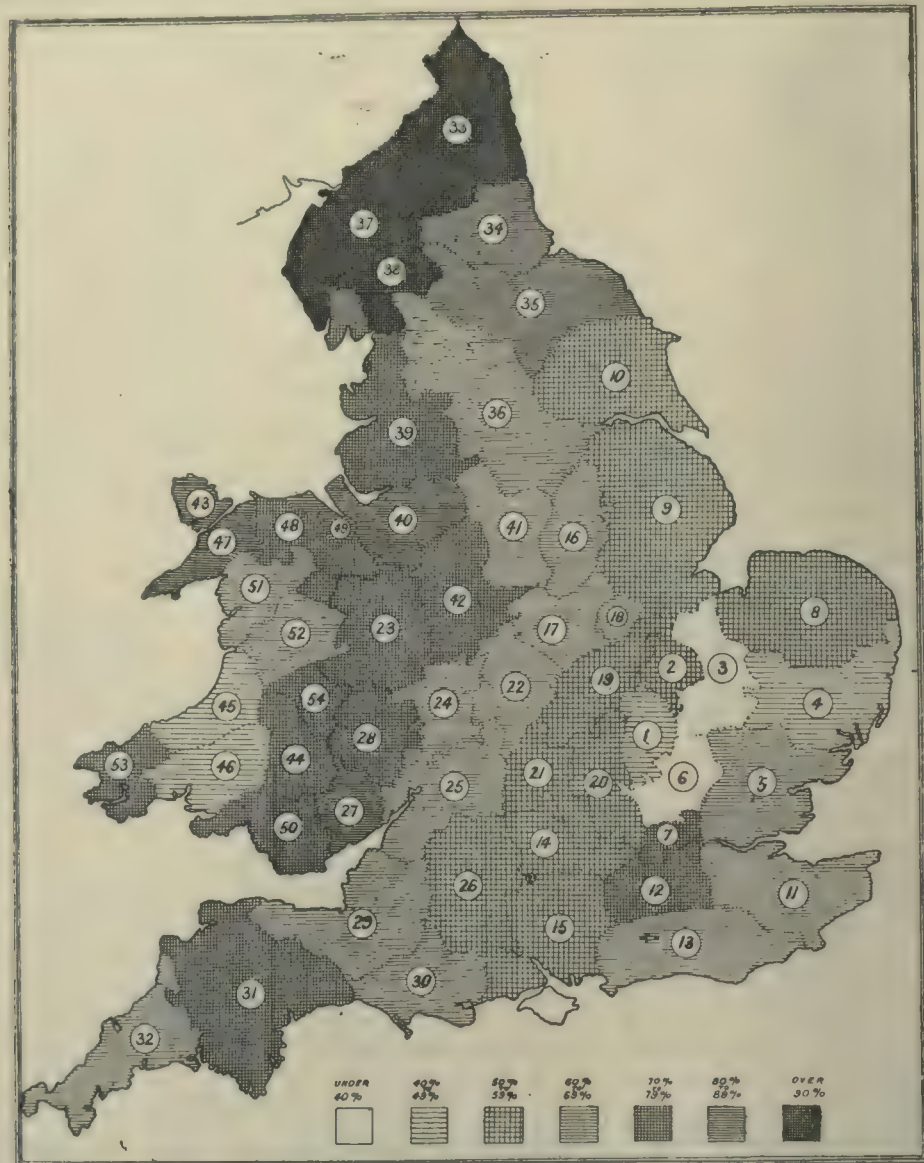


Figure 4

FIG. 4

The accompanying sketch Map of England and Wales indicates by the variations of shading the extent of the reduction in the wheat area in each county during the last 30 years. It will be seen that the rate of decline is distributed along three main divisions; firstly, the central counties in which the reduction has ranged between 40 and 50 per cent.; secondly, the more easterly counties in which the decline has been more than 40 per cent.; and lastly, the more westerly counties in which the decline has been more than 50 per cent., reaching in the case of Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmoreland more than 90 per cent.



(Figures in brackets after each County denote percentage reduction in wheat area in 1901-05 compared with 1871-75.)

DIVISION I.	DIVISION II.	DIVISION III.	DIVISION IV.	DIVISION V.
1. Bedford (49).	11. Kent (69).	23. Salop (78).	33. Northumberland (93).	43. Anglesey (87).
2. Hunts (51).	12. Surrey (71).	24. Worcester (68).	34. Durham (85).	44. Brecon (77).
3. Cambridge (39).	13. Sussex (63).	25. Gloucester (63).	35. York, N. Riding (84).	45. Cardigan (40).
4. Suffolk (47).	14. Berks. (54).	26. Wilts. (56).	36. York, W. Riding (66).	46. Carmarthen (44).
5. Essex (60).	15. Hants. (59).	27. Monmouth (81).	37. Cumberland (95).	47. Carnarvon (86).
6. Herts. (33).	16. Notts. (62).	28. Hereford (71).	38. Westmoreland (94).	48. Denbigh (79).
7. Middlesex (77).	17. Leicester (63).	29. Somerset (69).	39. Lancashire (72).	49. Flint (85).
8. Norfolk (52).	18. Rutland (65).	30. Dorset (62).	40. Cheshire (83).	50. Glamorgan (75).
9. Lincoln (57).	19. Northampton (59).	31. Devon (71).	41. Derby (68).	51. Merioneth (62).
10. York, E. Riding (59).	20. Bucks. (59).	32. Cornwall (62).	42. Stafford (75).	52. Montgomery (69).
	21. Oxford (56).			53. Pembroke (70).
	22. Warwick (68).			54. Radnor (73).

We may now compare the price of wheat with that of other cereals. The average price of wheat for the period 1801-11 was 85s.; of barley, 41·11s.; of oats, 28s. In 1841-51 the respective averages were 51·2s., 35·11s., and 23·8s. Taking now the period 1871-81, thirty years after the repeal of the Corn Laws, the average price of wheat was 50·7s., or 6d. less than the average for the ten years 1841-51; the average price of barley, 37·5s., and of oats, 24·11s. That is, the price of barley and oats actually increased, the former by 2s. 5d. and the latter by about 4d. Taking now the period 1891-1901, wheat fell to 28·1s., barley to 25·1s., and oats to 17·7s. That is, in the last thirty years there was a movement similar in kind but different in degree to the movement in wheat. But the ratio of the prices of barley and of oats to that of wheat has steadily altered throughout the period under review. This is illustrated in Figs. 5 and 6, and for each 11-years' period in Table 7.

66

Figure 5

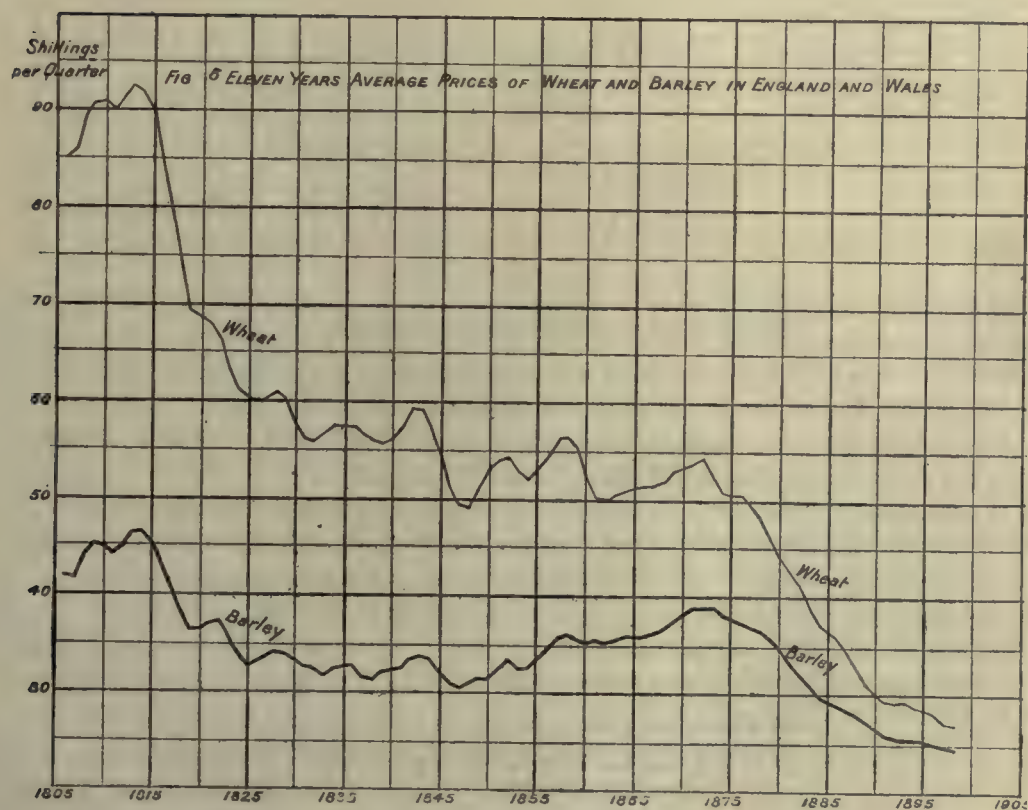
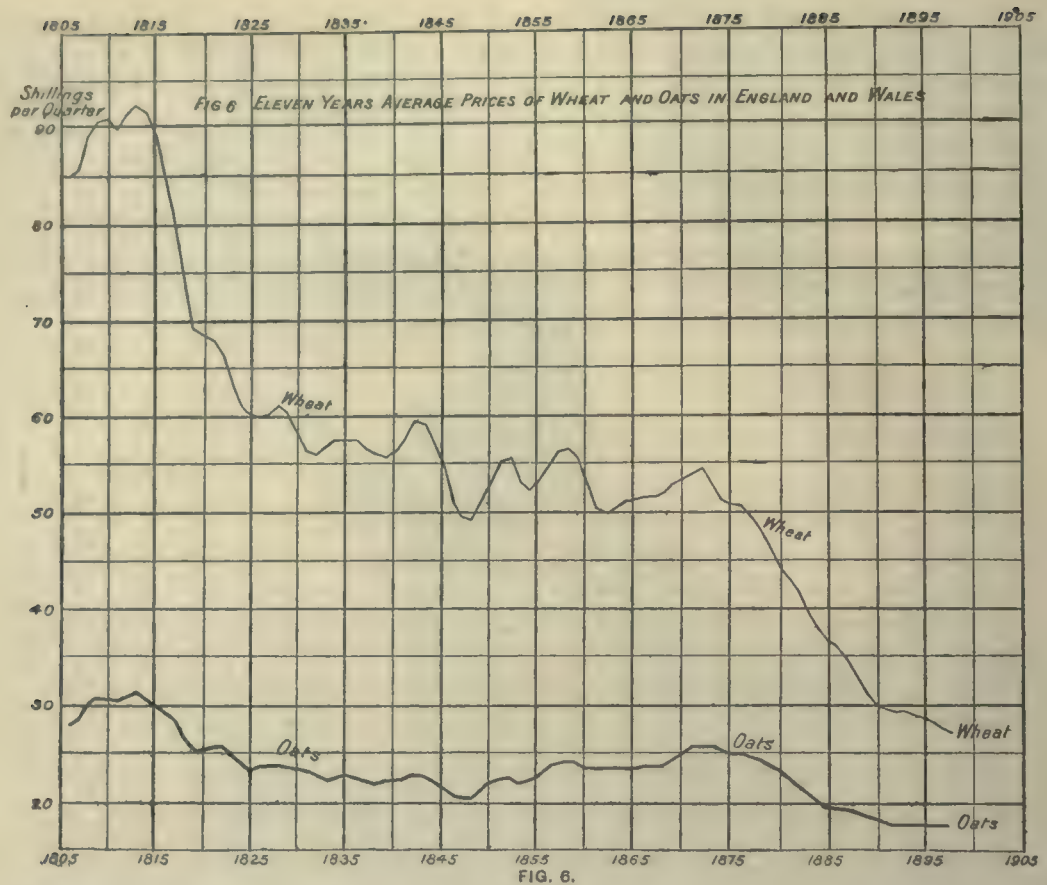


FIG. 5.

67

68

Figure 6



The movement is brought out more clearly by the curves showing the 11-yearly average prices of wheat, barley and oats. Taking first barley, the course of prices is downwards, until the repeal of the Corn Laws; then for thirty years prices rise; while during the last thirty years a considerable fall has taken place. The curves bring out in a remarkable manner one feature of the prices of wheat and barley. Whatever the general course of prices and independent of all changes of policy, the maxima and minima points correspond throughout the nineteenth century. The 11-yearly average prices of oats during the nineteenth century show greater steadiness than wheat or barley, so that the change in one direction or the other is not considerable. But, as in the case of barley, the general course is downwards, until the repeal of the Corn Laws; then for thirty years prices rise; and during the last thirty years a considerable fall has taken place, so that during the century the price of barley has changed from less than one-half the price of wheat to almost the same. As in the case of barley, the maxima and minima points for the price of oats correspond with those of wheat.

TABLE 7.—AVERAGE PRICES OF WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS, AND RATIOS OF BARLEY AND OATS TO WHEAT, IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

	Price per Quarter.			Ratio to Wheat Price.	
	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Barley.	Oats.
				Per cent.	Per cent.
1801-11	85.0	41.11	28.0	49.2	32.9
1811-21	84.8	43.5	29.5	51.3	34.7
1821-31	60.0	33.1	23.9	55.1	39.6
1831-41	57.6	32.10	22.8	57.1	39.4
1841-51	51.2	30.10	20.9	60.3	40.6
1851-61	54.8	34.8	23.8	63.4	43.3
1861-71	51.7	35.11	23.10	69.6	46.2
1871-81	50.7	37.5	24.11	74.0	49.3
1881-91	35.10	28.11	19.6	80.7	54.4
1891-1901	28.1	25.1	17.7	89.3	62.6

We have been able to work out the averages for meat only since 1841. Taking the year 1900 as the base, a series of index numbers has been calculated showing the variations in the price of meat from 1841 to 1902. This method was imposed on us by the difficulty of obtaining a continuous series of prices of any kind of meat which would be typical of the changes in meat-prices generally. A large number of quotations have been used from the *Report of Wholesale and Retail Prices* and have been dealt with in the manner employed by Mr. A. L. Bowley in his investigations on Wages in the nineteenth century. These variations are considerable, and are shown in the table and the first diagram. Falling from 104 in 1841 to 87 in 1842, the index number was below 100 until 1853,

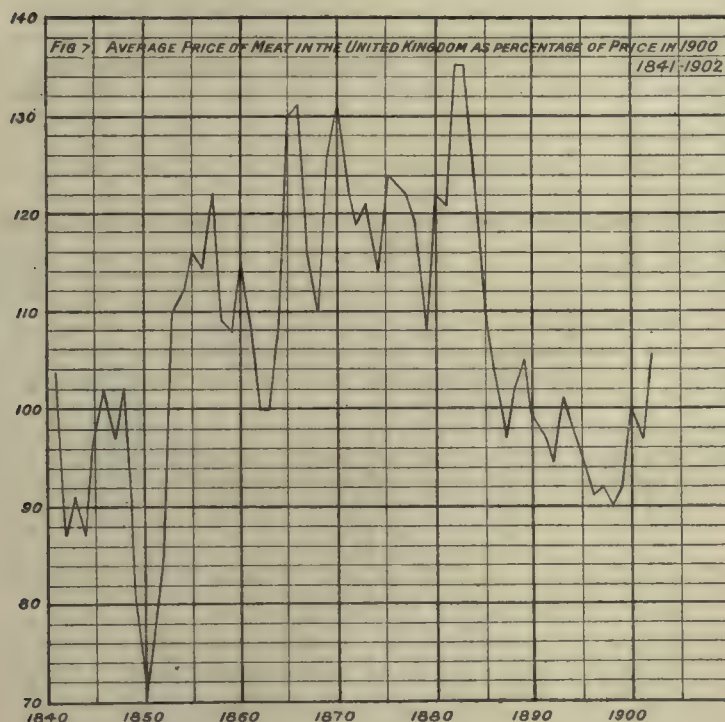


Figure 7

FIG. 7.

except in 1846 and 1848, when it was 102. From 1853 until 1883 the general course was upwards, and in 1883, after forty years of free importation, prices had increased 55 per cent. If instead of taking the index numbers for each year we take the eleven years' average for each year and so get rid of temporary fluctuations, we find that the normal course of prices was continuously and decidedly upwards for more than thirty years, while for the last twenty years of the nineteenth century there was as rapid and continuous a fall. Thus up to the end of the seventies, the tendency for meat to rise steadily in price, coincided with a tendency for corn to remain stationary. Since then prices of both meat and corn have fallen steadily.

Figure 8

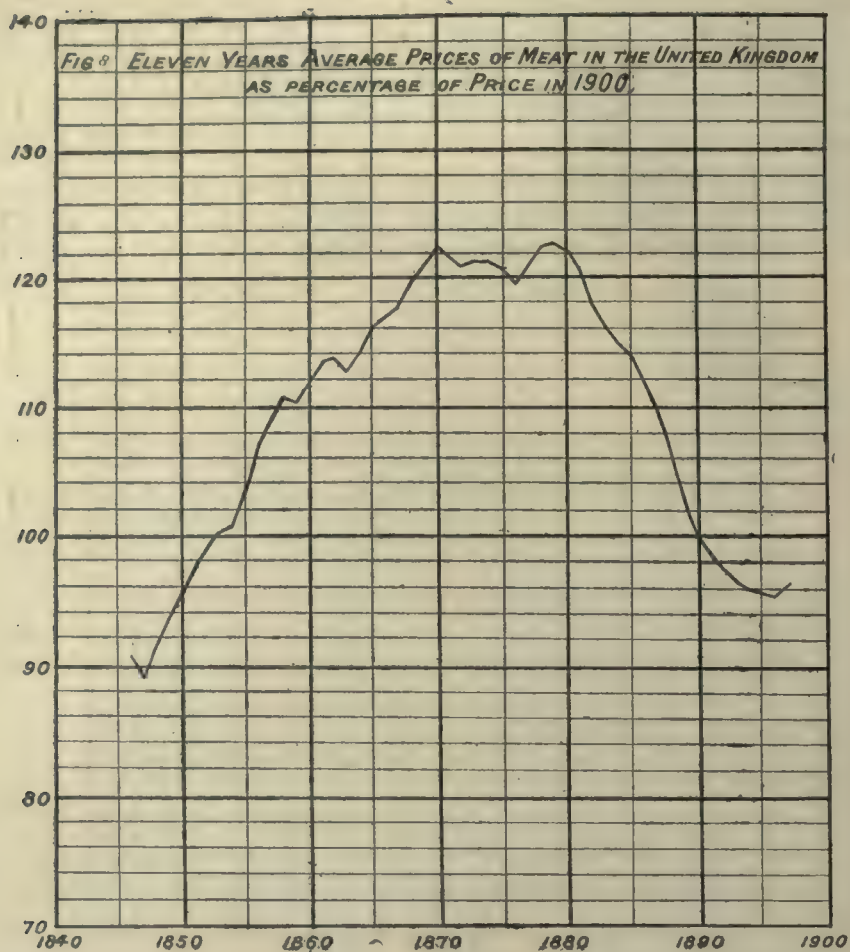


FIG. 8.

Table 8

TABLE 8.—AVERAGE PRICE OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS OF MEAT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AS PERCENTAGE OF PRICE IN 1900.

Year.	Percentage.	Year.	Percentage.	Year.	Percentage.
1841	104	1862	100	1883	135
2	87	3	100	4	123
3	91	4	108	5	110
4	87	5	130	6	103
5	97	6	131	7	97
6	102	7	116	8	102
7	97	8	110	9	105
8	102	9	126	1890	99
9	82	1870	131	1	97
1850	72	1	123	2	94
1	78	2	119	3	101
2	85	3	121	4	98
3	110	4	114	5	95
4	112	5	124	6	91
5	116	6	123	7	92
6	114	7	122	8	90
7	122	8	119	9	92
8	109	9	108	1900	100
9	108	1880	122	1	97
1860	115	1	121	2	106
1	109	2	135		

We add the following comparison between the prices in the United Kingdom of agricultural and other produce, based on the figures published in the *Report on Wholesale and Retail Prices*, and the *Labour Gazette* (Jan., 1906). The price in 1871 in each case assumed to be 100.

TABLE 9.—PRICES OF CORN, MEAT, &c., 1871-1905. (1871=100.)

Table 9

	Corn, &c.	Meat, Fish and Dairy Produce.	All other Produce.	Total.
1871-1880	102·5	109·6	103·5	105·2
1881-1890	80·0	99·3	79·4	85·9
1891-1900	67·0	88·3	73·0	76·3
1901-1905	64·6	90·7	78·1	78·6

82

The price of corn is seen to have fallen much more than prices in general. While corn prices fell by an average of 37 per cent., general prices fell by 25 per cent. only, or the rate of fall has been 50 per cent. greater in the former case. On the other hand, prices of meat, fish and dairy produce fell by 17 per cent. only.

It follows from this examination of the course of prices during the nineteenth century that :—

(1) While the Corn Laws were in operation there took place a considerable fall of prices after the conclusion of the great war with France ; (2) prices showed a tendency to rise again just before the repeal of the Corn Laws, but never reached anything approaching the war level ; (3) the repeal of the Corn Laws was followed for thirty years by no diminution in the price of wheat, but if anything an increase ; and by an increase in the cases of barley, oats, and meat ; (4) the country became more and more dependent on foreign sources for its food supply without any reduction in price to the consumer—a dependence which is continually increasing ; (5) during the last thirty years prices have fallen, but the causes of that fall have still to be investigated because it is not peculiar to the United Kingdom ; (6) the prices of corn have during the past thirty-five years fallen much more rapidly than prices in general.

General Conclusions
from English Prices

83

84

(C)—INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS.

We proceed now, therefore, to examine the experience of foreign countries. These countries have pursued policies differing widely from that of the United Kingdom, and their social and industrial organisation, their systems of land tenure and many other conditions differ from those of the United Kingdom. If therefore we find a strongly marked similarity in the course of prices, we should be justified in concluding that there had been in operation some force or forces strong enough to override national and local circumstances. It is, however, extremely difficult to obtain, in the case of foreign countries a sufficiently long period for comparison, because national boundaries have altered.

The Experience of
Foreign Countries

We take first the case of France. Here the experience in regard to home production and imports has been very different from that of England. Production has steadily increased for seventy years, and we may add, since early times, rising from 100·7 million cwts. in 1831-35 to 144·9 in 1866-70, and to 173·8 in 1901-1903. Imports were comparatively trifling until the period 1876-80, when they reached 23·77 million cwts. or 14·11 per cent. of the total supply. In 1891-95 net imports were 26·34 million cwts. or 14·49 per cent. of the total supply. Since that period, however, they have fallen off and in 1901-1903 were only 4·97 million cwts. Practically, therefore, France has always been self-sufficient. The production of wheat per head rose from 3·07 cwts. per head in 1832-35 to 4·82 cwts. in 1881-85, and then fell to 4·56 cwts. in 1901-1903, notwithstanding a fall of prices from 10·29s. *per cwt.* to 8·71s. *per cwt.*, or 16 per cent. The general course of wheat prices in France can be best seen in the diagram which gives the 11-yearly averages throughout the nineteenth century. Until 1872 normal prices were always below those of England, the difference being very considerably in favour of France. But the general movement is very similar to that of England. During the great war prices rose. They then fell rapidly, but during the middle period of the century rose, reaching another maximum point between 1865 and 1875. From that period they have fallen rapidly, but the fall has been less marked than in England. In a previous section we showed that the maxima and minima points of the 11-yearly average prices of wheat, barley and oats in England corresponded. This diagram brings out the same remarkable correspondence in the wheat prices of England and France.

Figure 9

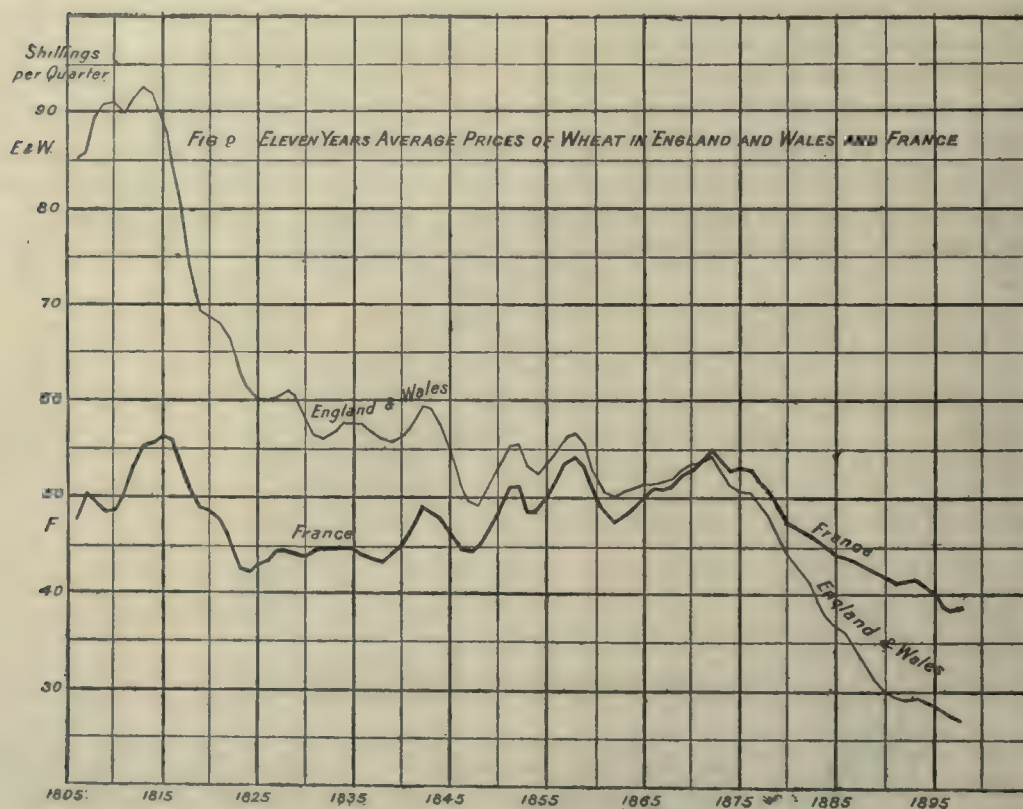


FIG. 9.

TABLE 10.—WHEAT SUPPLY IN FRANCE, AND PRICE—1831-1903.

Table 10

89

	Production.	Excess Imports.	Supply per head.	Per cent. of excess imports to total supply.	Price per cwt.
	Millions of cwts.	Millions of cwts.	Cwts.	—	Shillings.
1831-35.. .. .	100·7	·40	3·07	·40	9·78
1836-40.. .. .	101·8	·47	3·02	·46	10·77
1841-45.. .. .	109·4	·93	3·17	·84	10·66
1846-50.. .. .	125·4	1·95	3·58	1·53	10·73
1851-55.. .. .	119·7	2·27	3·88	1·87	12·19
1856-60.. .. .	146·0	-1·00	3·98	-·70	11·82
1861-65.. .. .	146·9	4·17	4·01	2·76	11·02
1866-70.. .. .	144·9	5·16	3·92	3·44	12·60
1871-75.. .. .	149·2	7·68	4·31	4·90	12·91
1876-80.. .. .	138·6	23·77	4·34	14·11	11·90
1881-85.. .. .	161·3	21·35	4·82	11·69	10·29
1886-90.. .. .	160·4	19·92	4·71	11·05	9·78
1891-95.. .. .	155·5	26·34	4·73	14·49	9·06
1896-1900	170·5	11·37	4·69	6·25	8·92
1901-03.. .. .	173·8	4·97	4·56	2·78	8·71

In Italy, the number of persons fed on home-grown wheat has remained much the same during the last 40 years, being 22·3 millions in 1862-5, 26·6 millions in 1881-5 and 1896-1900, and 24·6 millions in 1901-3. The percentage of the population so provided for has ranged, in the same period, from 93·5 % in 1866-70 to 77·3 % in 1886-90, and in 1901-3, 74·9 %. Imports do not show the same variations as France, but have increased more or less steadily. In 1862 the average importation was 8·94 million cwts. and the price 45s. 6d. It fell to 4·16 million cwts. in 1866-70, prices rising to 50s. 5d. Importation then rose to 16·23 million cwts. in 1886-90, when the price was 39s. 6d., and fell to 12·46 million cwts. in 1891-95, the price being 38s. 11d. In the period 1901-3, an average of 21·28 million cwts. were imported, the price being 43s. 9d. Taking now the 11-year averages during the nineteenth century we find that, as in England, prices reached a high maximum point about 1815 and then fell rapidly. In the middle period of the century prices rose, reaching a higher level than that of 1815 (in Italy) in 1875. Then a rapid fall set in, as in England, which went on unchecked till about 1890, when English and Italian prices parted company, the former falling and the latter rising. Until 1870 prices in Italy were always lower than in England. The maxima and minima points in England and Italy correspond throughout the period.

Italy

Wheat Prices in Italy

90

91

92

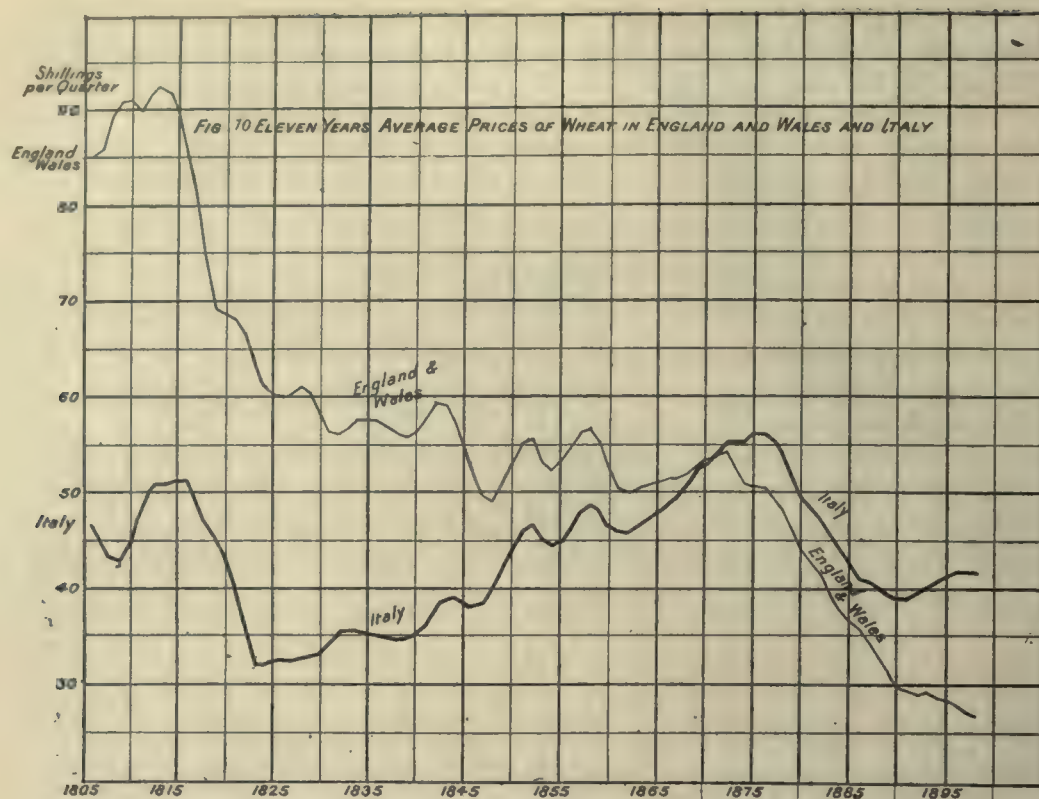


FIG. 10.

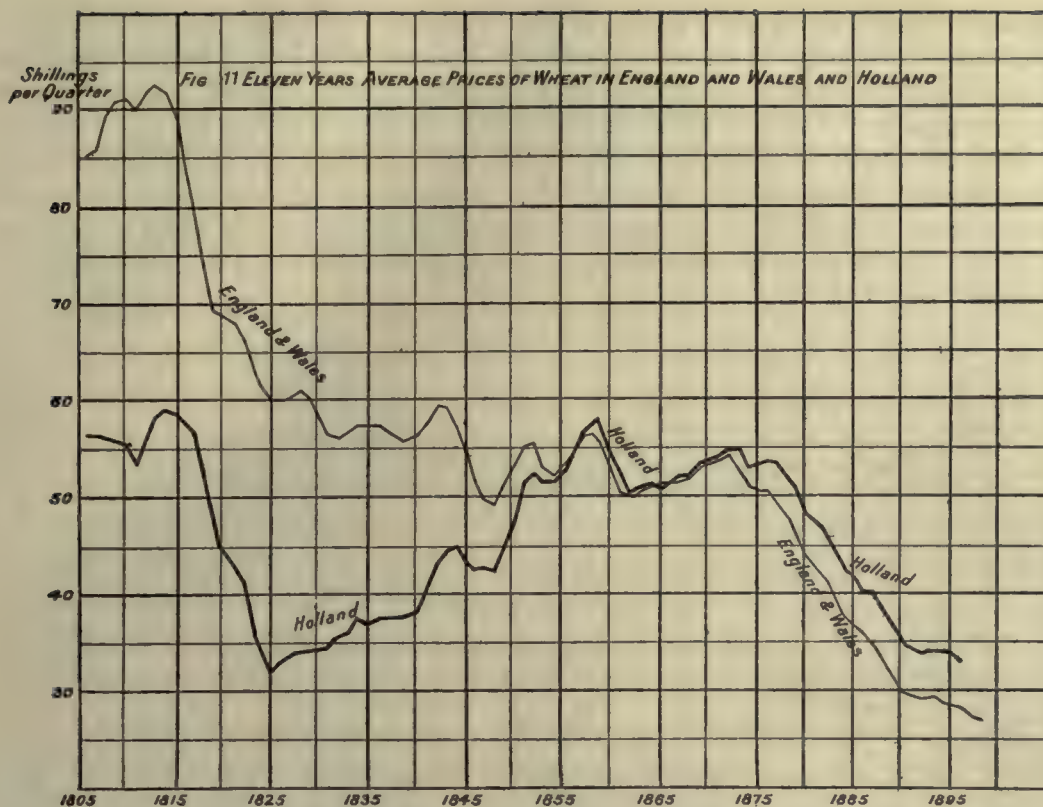
Table 11

TABLE 11.—WHEAT SUPPLY IN ITALY, AND PRICE—1862-1903.

			Net Imports (million cwts).	Imports per head (cwts).	Population (millions).	Estimated population fed from home-grown wheat.		Official price per qr.
						per cent.	millions.	s. d.
1862-65	..	..	8.94	.345	25.74	86.5	22.3	45 6
1866-70	..	..	4.16	.158	26.35	93.5	24.6	50 5
1871-75	..	..	4.78	.177	27.05	92.6	25.1	58 2
1876-80	..	..	5.09	.183	27.88	92.4	25.8	56 2
1881-85	..	..	5.12	.178	28.77	92.6	26.6	42 4
1886-90	..	..	16.23	.544	29.82	77.3	22.2	39 6
1891-95	..	..	12.46	.404	30.88	83.2	25.8	38 11
1896-1900	..	..	12.40	.388	31.93	83.1	26.6	44 2
1901-03	..	..	21.28	.648	32.83	74.9	24.6	43 9

Prices in Holland

The movement of prices in Holland shows a remarkable correspondence with that of England. Taking first the earlier part of the century, there is the same rapid downward movement after 1815. From 1825 prices steadily rose until in the fifties they reached the same level as in England. From that time they are of the same order as English prices. There is the same remarkable fall since 1876, Dutch prices, however, being rather higher than English during the 30 years. The maxima and minima points correspond throughout the nineteenth century.



F G. 1 .

It is impossible to deal with Germany as a whole. On the following diagram, however, we show the 11-yearly average price of wheat in England, Prussia and Bavaria. The same general features

Prices of Wheat in Prussia and Bavaria

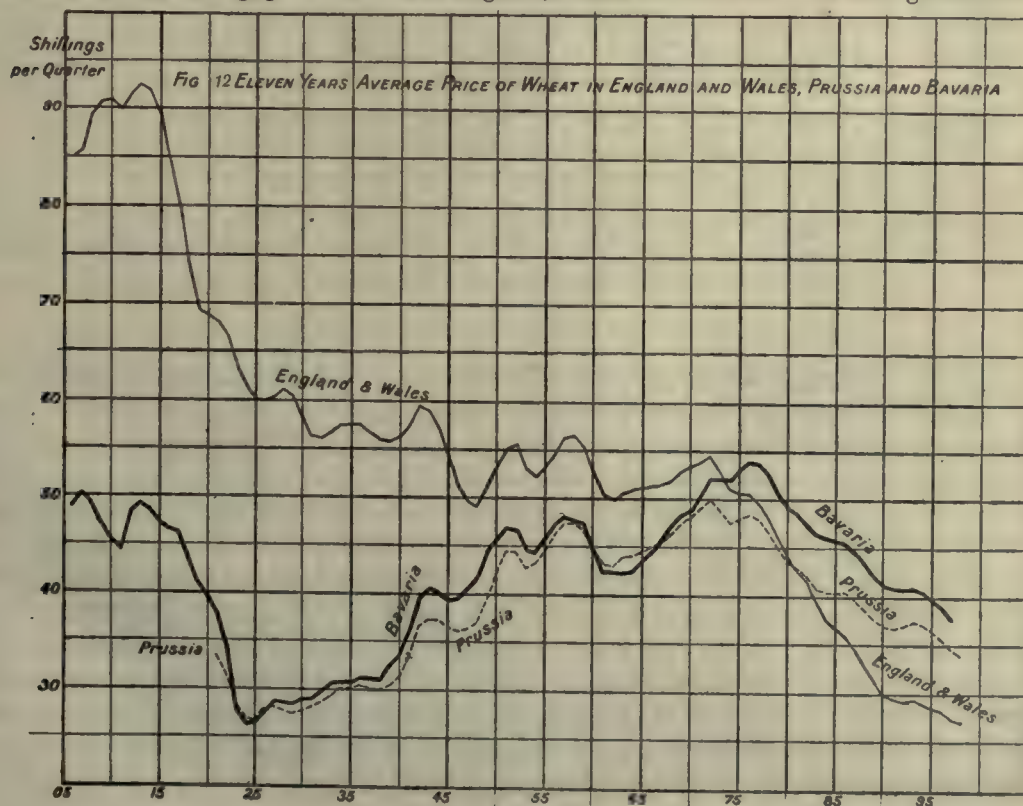


FIG. 12.

Figure 12

are brought out as in the diagrams relating to other countries. In England, under the Corn Laws, prices fell, and then under free importation remained stagnant for 30 years, while in Prussia prices increased with free importation and declined rapidly with Corn Laws in operation. Thus in Germany corn was cheaper in its Corn Law period than under Free Imports. The rapid fall since 1876 occurs in Prussia and Bavaria, as in other countries, and the maxima and minima points correspond with those of England, France, Italy and Holland. This correspondence extends, as we found to be the case in England, to barley and oats. But in Prussia and Bavaria the general course of barley and oats has been upward since 1824, the tendency of normal prices to fall during the last 30 years being very slight. (Fig. 13.)

Prices of Barley and Oats in Prussia and Bavaria

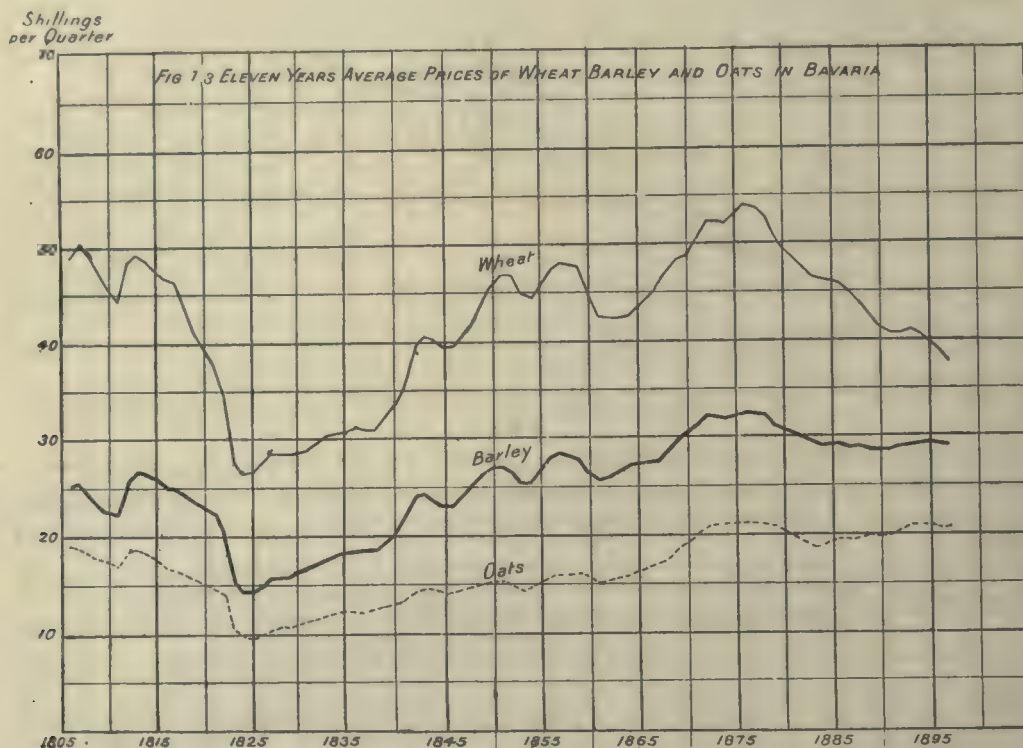


FIG. 13.

This brief review of foreign countries in comparison with England shows beyond question that throughout the nineteenth century there was a certain periodic movement of the prices of cereals common to the whole of Europe, and apparently quite independent of local or national conditions. This periodic movement is clearly beyond human control. But all countries also show a remarkable fall of the price of wheat and a less marked fall in the price of other cereals during the last 30 years. The course of prices of meat in England is, however, different from that of cereals, and the ratio also between wheat, barley, and oats has radically changed, the fall in wheat having been more pronounced than that of other cereals. We found in examining the operation of the Corn Laws that when they were suspended and free, and even when bounty-fed importation prevailed, it was impossible to import any considerable quantity of corn from foreign countries. In the first place, the corn was not there in sufficient abundance, and in the second place it was quite impossible to produce it cheaply enough to place it on the English market at a price remunerative to the exporter, except when wheat in England rose above 50s. At the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws, and for years after, experts

Summary of Conclusions from Comparative Statistics

The Fall in Wheat since 1876

Difficulties of Importation before 1876

stated with perfect confidence that wheat would not fall below 45s. a quarter. The following Tables show the charges from various ports whence we obtained corn, before it could be landed in England :—

TABLE 12.—COST OF BRINGING WHEAT FROM VARIOUS FOREIGN WHEAT CENTRES TO THE UNITED KINGDOM (FROM McCULLOCH'S DICTIONARY, 1859). Table 12

	Original Selling Price.	Freights.	Other Expenses.	Final Selling Price.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Warsaw (1859)	28 0	12 6	6 6	47 0
Dantzic (1827)	30 0	6 6	7 10	44 4
" (1841)	40 0	4 6	4 7½	49 1½
Odessa (1849)	30 0	12 9	5 11	48 8
New York (1850)	37 4	3 0	9 5½	49 9½
Canada*	30 0	3 0	7 0	40 0

* For spring wheat worth about 5s. per qr. less than English wheat.

There has been an immense development of agriculture in the United States, Russia and other exporting countries, and the conditions of transport have been revolutionised. The following Table shows the development of Russia as an exporting country :— Changes since 1876

TABLE 13.—EXPORTS OF WHEAT FROM RUSSIA. Table 13

Period.	Quantity (bushels).	Average.	Value in £.	Average value.	Av. price per bushel (shillings).
1861-65	113·9	28·5	24·59	6·1	4·28
1866-70	220·6	44·1	50·50	10·1	4·58
1871-75	287·0	57·4	75·62	15·1	5·26
1876-80	318·9	63·8	68·56	13·7	4·29
1881-85	361·7	72·3	73·25	14·6	4·04
1886-90	488·5	97·7	83·60	16·7	3·42
1891-95	513·6	100·7	69·69	13·9	2·76
1896-1900	500·7	100·1	79·10	15·8	3·16

Thus the quantity exported to all countries rose from an annual average of 28,500,000 bushels in 1861-5 to 100,100,000 bushels in 1896-1900, an increase of 350 %, while the average price per bushel fell from 4·28s. to 3·16s. This wheat dispersed through the markets of the United Kingdom, Germany, and other importing countries, has been one of the factors lowering prices during the last 30 years. The development of the United States has been even more remarkable :— Development of Russia and U.S.A.

TABLE 14.—PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES, ACCORDING TO CENSUS RETURNS. Table 14

	Persons engaged in Agric.	Number of Animals.			Production of		Population.
		Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.	Wheat.	Corn.	
	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Million bushels.	Million bushels.	Millions.
1840	—	14·971	19·311	26·301	84·8	377·5	17·1
1850	—	17·779	21·773	30·354	100·5	592·1	23·2
1860	—	25·616	22·471	33·513	173·1	838·8	31·4
1870	5,922	25·484	40·853	26·751	235·9	1094·3	38·6
1880	7,714	33·258	40·766	34·034	498·5	1717·4	50·2
1890	8,566	52·802	44·336	51·603	399·3	1490·0	62·6
1900	10,438	43·902	41·883	37·079	522·2	2105·1	76·3

The progress of German agriculture in the last quarter of a century is shown in the following Table which is taken from the last number of *Agricultural Statistics*, issued by the Board of Agriculture. There is seen to have been small increases in the areas under wheat and rye, and a considerable increase under potatoes. Except sheep, whose number has fallen very greatly, there have been large increases in the numbers of cattle and pigs.

Table 15

TABLE 15.—PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE IN GERMANY.

Period—Year nearest to.	Arable Land.	Wheat.	Rye.	Potatoes.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.
	Million acres.	Million acres.	Million acres.	Million acres.	Millions.	Millions.	Millions.
1880	64.6	4.5	14.6	6.8	15.8	19.2	9.2
1890	65.0	4.8	14.4	7.2	17.5	15.6	12.2
1900	65.2	5.1	14.8	8.0	18.9	9.7	16.8
1905	65.2	4.8	15.2	8.2	19.3	7.9	18.9

The following Table, showing the number of live stock in the principal Continental countries and the United States, has been compiled from the official returns of those countries. In the majority of cases continuous figures for each year do not exist ; in these instances an estimate of the number for any required year has been made on the basis of the returns for the two nearest years on either side of it. This method ensures substantial accuracy in presenting the movement which may have been taking place.

We see that in every country whose returns have been examined, the numbers of cattle and pigs have increased in some cases to three times the number 30 years ago. The number of sheep has diminished in France, Germany, Denmark, Italy, Hungary and Belgium, but has increased considerably in Russia, Roumania, and especially so in the United States.

Table 16

TABLE 16.—NUMBER OF LIVE STOCK (IN MILLIONS).
CATTLE.

	France.	Germany.	Russia.	Rou- mania.	Den- mark.	Italy.	United States.	Hun- gary.	Belgium.
1870 ..	10.40	15.78	21.41	2.28	1.22	2.42	23.82	5.28	1.35
1880 ..	11.45	15.79	25.24	2.35	1.45	4.57	39.68	5.31	1.38
1890 ..	13.56	17.47	25.99	2.52	1.56	5.00	57.65	6.26	1.41
1900 ..	14.52	18.94	32.91	2.59	1.78	5.24	67.82	7.22	1.66

SHEEP AND LAMBS.

1870 ..	21.89	26.74	45.30	3.53	1.86	5.63	28.48*	15.08	.46
1880 ..	22.52	19.20	49.23	4.33	1.58	8.33	43.58	9.84	.37
1890 ..	21.66	15.60	43.57	5.00	1.24	6.90	43.42	8.69	.28
1900 ..	20.18	9.69	49.64†	5.66	.99	5.01	59.76	7.55	.20

* Not including Lambs. † Including Goats.

PIGS.

1870 ..	4.62	6.49	9.05	1.21	.43	1.13	25.13	4.44	.31
1880 ..	5.57	9.20	9.86	.98	.52	1.98	47.68	4.16	.65
1890 ..	6.02	12.20	9.60	.93	.79	1.80	50.63	6.27	.99
1900 ..	6.74	16.81	11.37	1.71	1.29	1.51	56.98	8.39	1.01

The following table shows the average farm value of wheat in U.S.A. and the changes which have taken place in freight charges from Chicago during the last 40 years. These figures are taken from the Statistical Abstract for the United States. The farm value per quarter has fallen from 38s. 6d. to 23s. 11d.—a fall of 38 %. The Chicago-New York railway rate per quarter has fallen from 13s. 11d. to 3s. 7d.—a fall of 75 %, and the New York-Liverpool freight rate has fallen from 2s. or 2s. 11d. in 1871-75 to 4d.—a fall of 89 %. The cheaper transport began with the railway development in the United States from 1866 to 1880, and then extended to shipping freights. If we compare columns 1, 2 and 3 in this table with column 4, we can see that the fall in prices is fully accounted for.

TABLE 17.—AVERAGE VALUE OF WHEAT ON FARMS IN THE UNITED STATES, AND FREIGHT-RATES, CHICAGO TO NEW YORK (RAIL) AND NEW YORK TO LIVERPOOL. Table 17

				Farm Value per qr.		Freight Rates.				English Gazette Price per qr.		Export. Price U.S.A. per qr.	
						Chicago- New York (Rail) per qr.		New York to Liverpool per qr.					
				s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
1866-70	..	..	..	38	6	13	11	2	0	54	8	—	
1871-75	..	..	..	33	10	10	0	2	11	54	8	—	
1876-80	..	..	..	32	7	6	1	2	3½	47	6	—	
1881-85	..	..	..	29	4	4	10	1	3	40	1	35	8
1886-90	..	..	..	25	6	5	0	1	0	31	5	29	0
1891-95	..	..	..	20	0	4	7	0	10	27	11	26	8
1896-1900	..	..	..	23	1	3	10	1	0	28	7	25	8
1901-04	..	..	..	23	11	3	7	0	4	27	6	25	4

Reviewing the whole of this period in the light of British and foreign experience, it is clear that (1) up to the repeal of the Corn Laws the area under cultivation in England, the *per capita* produce, the variety of crops and the number of persons fed on home-grown supplies were increasing while prices were falling except for a few years just before the repeal; (2) imports had on the whole increased before the repeal of the Corn Laws, rising from a trifling quantity to 2,300,000 cwts. in 1831-5, 5,630,000 cwts. in 1836-40, and 6,960,000 cwts. in 1841-5. From that period up to the present time the increase has been rapid and continuous; (3) the number of persons fed on home-grown supplies reached its maximum in the period 1841-5, and since that period has shown a rapid and continuous decline (4) But prices did not decline considerably until more than 70 % of the population was fed on imported wheat, and other cereals and meat maintained their old level or increased in price until a later date than wheat. The explanation of this phenomenon is to be found in the relative rather than in the absolute profitableness of agriculture. Under the stimulus of high prices much land had been taken into cultivation on which the margin of profit was small, and notwithstanding improvements in husbandry and internal transport this land tended to become unprofitable when prices fell. Meanwhile the manufacturing activities of the country have been extending in every direction, and under the virtual monopoly which Great Britain enjoyed profits were high and wages increasing. Hence while improvements were constantly applied to the better soils, the poorer soils were abandoned, and there took place a gradual but increasing displacement of agriculture by manufacturing, a change which is reflected in the rapidly diminishing number of persons engaged in the former. The repeal of the Corn Laws at once accentuated this movement, as is shown in the tables, because that measure removed the security which the agricultural classes enjoyed and diminished the relative advantages of agriculture. But the "consumer" did not benefit from the change. Free importation determined the direction of national activities and made the country gradually more dependent on foreign supplies but did not bring low prices. For the fall of prices consumers had to wait for more than a generation,

General Conclusions
as to the Causes
of the decline of
British Agriculture

Relative
Profitableness
of Agriculture

Abandonment of
poor soils;
increase of
manufacturing

and then the general level of prices was to a large extent determined by great monetary changes.*

In the footnote below we refer to the vast literature existing on the relation between monetary changes and the fall in prices, including the supplementary report of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression appointed by Mr. Gladstone in 1895.

That Report, signed by a majority of the Commissioners, concurred with the Reports of the Committees appointed between 1820 and 1837 in regard to the relation between monetary changes and prices. It placed on record the opinion that the fall of prices must be traced, at all events in part, to the changes made in 1873 in the position of silver; that those changes were a matter of the gravest interest to the agricultural future of the country, and that the restoration of silver, either wholly or partially, to the position it occupied prior to 1873, would be of the greatest benefit to the agricultural industry.

In view of the full investigation then made we have not thought it necessary to enter upon a fresh examination of the question or to discuss it upon its merits. In the last ten years the position as to silver has been still further changed by the action of other countries and by further monetary changes, so that the question of restoring silver to its old position, whatever could be said for or against it originally, has ceased, at all events for the present, to be within the pale of 'practical politics'. Moreover we are not concerned so much with the general level of prices as the relation between agricultural and other prices.

The importance of at least one other cause of price-changes—namely, the heavy fall in transport rates both by land and sea, has already been indicated in Table 13. They appear to show that the greater relative fall in the prices of wheat and other agricultural produce was caused in the first instance by the railway development of the United States, and then by the revolution in the conditions of ocean transport. Moreover, the greater fall of agricultural relative to other prices after 1876 was not confined to the United Kingdom but extended throughout the world. But the review of international conditions which we have given has disclosed certain broad differences in the experience of the United Kingdom and foreign countries. In particular, the fall of prices has been more marked in the United Kingdom than in any foreign country whose statistics are available. We have now, therefore, to examine in detail the more recent experience of the United Kingdom, and to consider the reaction of the changed conditions of the last 30 years on the internal economy and the policy of the United Kingdom and foreign countries respectively.

(D)—RECENT AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The general experience of witnesses and farmers answering the Forms of Inquiry of the Commission is that arable farming has become unprofitable, the decline dating back to the seventies. This view is borne out by the official statistics given in the following tables:—

Table 18

TABLE 18.—AVERAGE ANNUAL ACREAGE UNDER CORN CROPS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM SINCE 1871 (IN THOUSANDS).

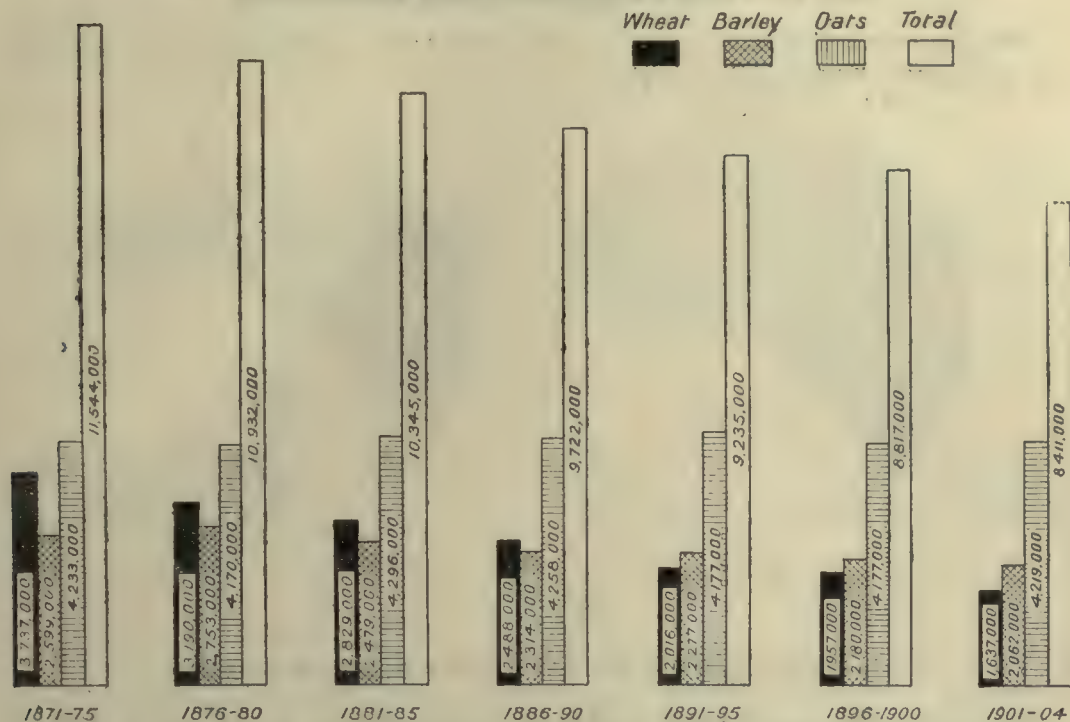
Period.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans & Peas.	Rye.	All kinds.
1871-75 ..	3,737	2,599	4,233	907	68	11,544
1876-80 ..	3,190	2,753	4,170	756	63	10,932
1881-85 ..	2,829	2,479	4,296	684	57	10,345
1886-90 ..	2,488	2,314	4,258	587	75	9,722
1891-95 ..	2,016	2,277	4,371	496	75	9,235
1896-1900 ..	1,957	2,180	4,177	425	78	8,817
1901-05 ..	1,677	2,024	4,203	425	70	8,399

* There is a vast literature on the relation between the monetary changes and the fall of prices. The whole subject was investigated by the Royal Commission on the Recent Changes in the Relative Value of the Precious Metals (1887-8), the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression (1895), the Reports of the British Commissioners and

Fig. 14 AVERAGE CORN ACREAGE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN CONSECUTIVE PERIODS
DISTINGUISHING WHEAT, BARLEY OATS & TOTAL CORN AREA.

Figure 14

121



122

Table 18 shows that 26 % of the corn area of 1871-75 has passed out of corn cultivation, the diminution having been from 11½ to 8½ million acres. The decline has been especially marked in wheat, the average area under which has fallen from 3,737,000 acres to 1,677,000, or by 2,060,000 acres. Thus the land which has passed out of wheat cultivation is considerably greater than the total present wheat area of the United Kingdom. The barley area has declined by about 20 %, while the area under oats has shown some tendency to increase. Of the total diminution of acreage under wheat, no less than 1,734,000 is attributable to England, the remainder being divided between Wales (77,000), Scotland (77,000), and Ireland (173,000).

123

TABLE 19.—AREAS UNDER CORN CROPS (ALL KINDS) IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND
(IN THOUSAND ACRES).

Table 19

	England.	Scotland.	Wales.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
1871-75 ..	7,559	1,421	538	2,026	11,544
1876-80 ..	7,194	1,403	489	1,846	10,932
1881-85 ..	6,769	1,393	472	1,711	10,345
1886-90 ..	6,357	1,337	445	1,583	9,722
1891-95 ..	6,022	1,295	412	1,506	9,235
1896-1900 ..	5,739	1,271	392	1,415	8,817
1901-05 ..	5,477	1,247	356	1,320	8,399

124

Delegates at the Paris and Brussels International Monetary Conferences (1878 and 1892). The supplementary report of the Royal Commission on Agricultural Depression (1895) which was signed by a majority of the Commissioners, and in this respect concurred with the reports of the earlier Committees appointed between 1820 and 1837, placed on record the opinion that the depression must be traced at all events in part to monetary causes, viz., the changes made in 1873 in the position of silver; that the reversal of 1873 was a subject of the gravest interest to the agricultural future of the country; and that the restoration of silver either wholly or partially to the position it occupied prior to 1873 would be of the greatest benefit to the agricultural industry.

FIG. 15.—PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CORN AREA IN UNITED KINGDOM UNDER WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS, IN 1871-75 AND 1901-03.

Figure 15

The percentages of the whole corn area under wheat, barley and oats respectively in the two periods are graphically illustrated in Fig. 15.

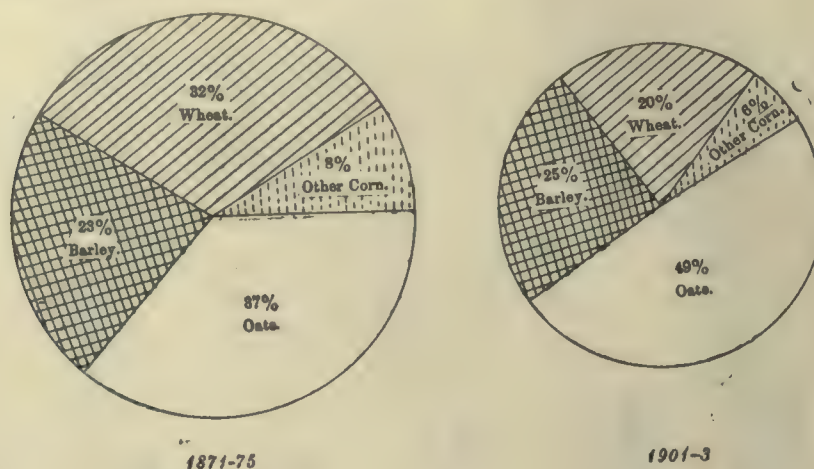


FIG. 15

(The areas are proportional to the total average areas cultivated in each period.)

In England the present wheat acreage is five-elevenths of its amount in 1871-75; in Wales and Scotland, about one-third each; in Ireland, less than one-fifth. Barley-land shows a decided diminution in every division; while oats-land has increased steadily in England, until it amounts now to upwards of half-a-million acres above that of the period 1871-75, and has diminished in every other division. The diminution in the total area (3,145,000 acres) under corn cultivation is made up of 2,082,000 acres in England; 174,000 acres in Scotland; 182,000 acres in Wales, and 706,000 acres in Ireland; equal to 28, 12, 34 and 35 % respectively. Summarising briefly the above results, it is found that in every branch of corn cultivation and in every division of the United Kingdom, with the single exception of oats in England, the area cultivated has steadily diminished since 1871.

Table 20

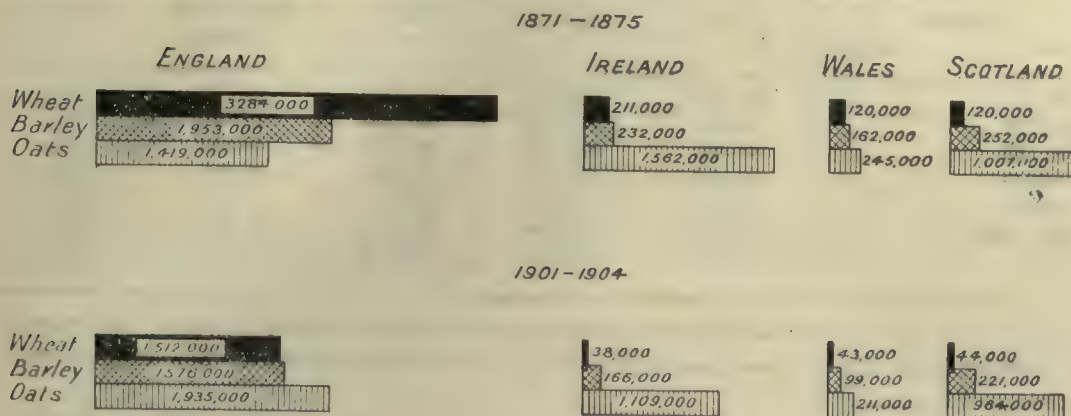
TABLE 20.—AVERAGE ACREAGE UNDER WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND (IN THOUSANDS).

Period.	Wheat.				Barley.				Oats.			
	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1871-75 ..	3,284	120	122	211	1,953	162	252	232	1,419	245	1,007	1,562
1876-80 ..	2,863	96	77	154	2,094	149	268	242	1,480	236	1,025	1,429
1881-85 ..	2,563	83	69	114	1,900	133	249	197	1,621	249	1,044	1,381
1886-90 ..	2,271	70	59	88	1,790	121	218	185	1,686	249	1,034	1,289
1891-95 ..	1,852	54	48	62	1,768	113	216	180	1,875	240	1,008	1,248
1896-1900 ..	1,805	53	48	51	1,664	105	234	180	1,810	229	968	1,170
1901-05 ..	1,550	43	45	38	1,543	97	219	165	1,924	210	964	1,104

FIG. 16.—ACREAGE UNDER WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND **Figure 16**
RESPECTIVELY, IN 1871-75 AND 1901-3.

129

ACREAGE UNDER WHEAT BARLEY AND OATS IN ENGLAND, WALES,
SCOTLAND AND IRELAND RESPECTIVELY IN 1871-75 & 1901-4.



130

FIG 16

The area under cultivation at any time must be regarded as a measure in general terms of the disposition which exists at the time for the investment of capital and energy in agricultural works. Regarded in this way, it is clear that the industry has suffered a considerable decline, and is certainly less remunerative. It remains to be seen whether the value of the return per head of the agricultural population, and those directly dependent on the proceeds from agricultural produce, has diminished to anything like the same extent as the area under cultivation. From a national point of view, the question turns upon the yield of agricultural produce rather than the cultivated areas.

**Yield of Corn
Crops**

131

The best available figures, as set out in Tables 21 and 22, show that in the case of wheat the production has fallen from an average of 94 million bushels in 1871-75 to less than 52 million bushels in 1901-4, a reduction of 45 %. The increased yield per acre has been from over 25 to about 30½ bushels, and is attributed in a large measure to the retention of only the best lands for wheat growing. In the same period the barley yield fell from 83 to 67 million bushels, or by nearly 20 %. The oats yield shows an increase from 164 to 172 million bushels, or of 5 %. In both barley and oats there is a slight improvement in the acreage, due, it is assumed, to improved methods of cultivation. The yield of beans and peas has gone down to about one-half in the thirty years, while rye, which is produced in only small quantities, has remained stationary.

TABLE 21.—ESTIMATED AVERAGE YIELD (IN BUSHELS) PER ACRE OF GRAIN.

Table 21

Period.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans and Peas.	Rye.
1871-75.. ..	25·16	32·00	38·75	24·00	30
1876-80.. ..	24·66	31·00	38·50	22·50	28
1881-85.. ..	28·84	35·00	38·75	24·10	30
1886-90.. ..	30·80	35·00	38·72	27·60	30
1891-95.. ..	28·18	32·73	39·89	24·89	30
1896-1900 ..	31·76	33·92	39·92	27·77	30
1901-5	30·77	33·19	41·17	27·51	30

132

In the next table (22) the yield of all descriptions of grain and pulse, have been calculated by application of the figures in the above table to those in Table .

Table 22

TABLE 22.—ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL YIELD OF GRAIN (IN THOUSANDS OF BUSHELS).

Period.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Beans and Peas.	Rye.
1871-75.. ..	94,020	82,850	164,030	21,768	2,040
1876-80.. ..	78,670	85,340	160,550	17,010	1,764
1881-85.. ..	81,590	86,770	166,470	16,484	1,710
1886-90.. ..	76,630	80,990	164,870	16,201	2,250
1891-95.. ..	58,830	74,530	174,320	12,345	2,250
1896-1900 ..	62,150	73,950	162,750	11,802	2,340
1901-5	51,855	66,970	172,268	11,676	2,100

In the next table (23) is shown the average annual yield of the principal classes of green crops on British farms. These figures cannot be carried back further than 1885, when the first official estimates were made.

In dealing with the yield of crops of all kinds, it is possible to make use of the official returns of the Board of Agriculture from the year 1886. Before that date, the only authoritative estimates are those published annually in the "Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society," compiled by Sir J. B. Lawes. These latter estimates are taken from a paper by Mr. R. E. Turnbull, in the "Trans. of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland," for 1898. The later figures are taken from the issues of the Board of Agriculture.

Green Crops

TABLE 23.—AREAS UNDER GREEN CROPS OF ALL KINDS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM, SINCE 1871 (IN THOUSAND ACRES).

Period.	Potatoes.	Turnips and Swedes.	Mangold.	Cabbage, K. Rabi and Rape.	Vetches, Tares and other Crops.	Total Green Crops.
1871-75	1,507	2,476	378	221	492	5,074
1876-80	1,384	2,394	399	216	481	4,874
1881-85	1,384	2,336	378	190	464	4,752
1886-90	1,367	2,264	389	204	425	4,649
1891-95	1,266	2,255	402	207	335	4,465
1896-1900 ..	1,225	2,097	426	221	350	4,319
1901-5	1,215	1,909	485	229	337	4,174

Table 23

Table 24

TABLE 24.—AREAS UNDER POTATOES, TURNIPS AND SWEDES, IN ENGLAND, WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND (IN THOUSAND ACRES).

Period.	Potatoes.				Turnips and Swedes.			
	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.
1871-75 ..	335	47	168	957	1,555	70	504	347
1876-80 ..	312	41	169	862	1,491	69	499	335
1881-85 ..	347	41	167	829	1,469	69	489	309
1886-90 ..	371	41	151	804	1,404	71	482	307
1891-95 ..	355	35	136	740	1,389	72	480	314
1896-1900 ..	380	33	127	685	1,245	68	470	314
1901-5 ..	413	31	134	635	1,099	61	455	293

The area under green crops has also declined considerably during the last thirty years. The total area is less by 900,000 acres, or 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ %, than it was in 1871-75, and the decline is accounted for to the extent of 292,000 acres under potatoes; 567,000 acres under turnips and swedes; 155,000 acres under vetches, tares and other crops; and an increase of 107,000 acres and 8,000 acres under mangold, cabbage, &c., respectively. The diminution (298,000 acres) of the area under potatoes in the United Kingdom is accounted for by decreases in Ireland (322,000 acres), Scotland (34,000 acres), and Wales (16,000 acres); and an increase in the case of England (78,000 acres). In the case of turnips and swedes there has been a diminution everywhere, especially in England. (See Table 24.)

The official figures as to the yield of green crops do not go back further than 1886. Since then there has been a small increase in all branches.

Yield of Green Crops

TABLE 25.—ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL YIELD OF VARIOUS GREEN CROPS (IN THOUSAND TONS).

Table 25

	Potatoes.	Mangolds.	Turnips and Swedes.
1886-90 ..	5,921	6,788	29,687
1891-95 ..	5,998	6,779	29,634
1896-1900 ..	5,401	7,547	26,615
1901-5 ..	6,331	9,310	26,507

The area which has been let down to pasture cannot be given for each period with the same fulness as the previous tables. This is due to the absence of returns for Ireland. From Table 26

Permanent Pasture

TABLE 26.—AREAS UNDER PERMANENT PASTURE, FOR HAY AND NOT FOR HAY, IN THE DIFFERENT DIVISIONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSAND ACRES).

Table 26

Period.	England.			Wales.			Scotland.			Ireland, &c.		
	For Hay.	Not for Hay.	Total.	For Hay.	Not for Hay.	Total.	For Hay.	Not for Hay.	Total.	For Hay.	Not for Hay.	Total.
1871-75 .	—	—	10,217	—	—	1,582	—	—	1,085	—	—	—
1876-80 .	—	—	11,050	—	—	1,752	—	—	1,148	—	—	—
1881-85 .	—	—	11,979	—	—	1,860	—	—	1,195	—	—	—
1886-90 .	4,064	8,558	12,622	489	1,448	1,937	151	1,056	1,207	—	—	—
1891-95 .	3,913	9,211	13,124	498	1,493	1,991	164	1,192	1,356	1,531	9,640	11,171
1896-1900	3,866	9,437	13,303	474	1,462	1,936	139	1,254	1,393	1,539	9,876	11,415
1901-5 ..	4,001	9,591	13,591	487	1,467	1,954	141	1,288	1,428	1,610	9,994	11,604

here given, it is, however, clear that between 1871-75 and 1901-1904 the total grass-area has increased by 3,374,000 acres (33 %) in England; by 372,000 acres (21 $\frac{1}{2}$ %) in Wales; and by 343,000 acres (31 $\frac{1}{2}$ %) in Scotland. The figures for Ireland can be given from 1891 only, but these show a similar movement to have been going on in that country.

The area under flax has diminished to one-third during the last thirty years, and that under hops to three-fourths of its former area. The area under small fruit has apparently increased, though the uncertainty connected with the earlier figures makes the assertion somewhat doubtful. It is probable, however, that the fruit area has not diminished.

Flax, Hops and Small Fruit

TABLE 27.—AREAS UNDER FLAX, HOPS AND SMALL FRUIT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSAND ACRES).

Period.	Flax.	Hops.	Small Fruit.*
1871-75	136	64	—
1876-80	138	69	—
1881-85	115	68	—
1886-90	119	61	42†
1891-95	83	58	66
1896-1900	48	52	75
1901-5	49	49	82

* Not separately distinguished in Ireland before 1899.

† Average of 1888-90.

British Live Stock.

Official figures show an increase of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million head, or 16 %, in the number of cattle enumerated in the United Kingdom between 1871-75 and 1901-4. In the same period the number of sheep declined by $3\frac{1}{2}$ million head, or 10 %; while the number of pigs has remained unaltered. (See Tables 28-30.)

Table 28

TABLE 28.—DISTRIBUTION OF CATTLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSANDS).

Period.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.*	United Kingdom.
1871-75	4,050	630	1,130	5,810	4,120	9,930
1876-80	4,080	630	1,100	5,810	4,050	9,860
1881-85	4,320	670	1,120	6,110	4,120	10,230
1886-90	4,540	690	1,140	6,370	4,200	10,570
1891-95	4,700	730	1,210	6,640	4,480	11,120
1896-1900	4,700	720	1,220	6,640	4,540	11,180
1901-5	4,818	728	1,227	6,773	4,731	11,504

Table 29

TABLE 29.—DISTRIBUTION OF SHEEP IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSANDS).

Period.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.*	United Kingdom.
1871-75	18,720	2,910	7,160	28,790	4,400	33,190
1876-80	18,070	2,850	6,980	27,910	4,000	31,910
1881-85	15,830	2,600	6,880	25,310	3,320	28,630
1886-90	16,260	2,780	6,880	25,930	3,760	29,690
1891-95	16,750	3,120	7,410	27,280	4,470	31,750
1896-19	15,150	3,300	7,470	26,720	4,330	31,050
1901-5	14,986	3,485	7,178	25,650	4,096	29,746

Table 30

TABLE 30.—DISTRIBUTION OF PIGS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSANDS).

Period.	England.	Wales.	Scotland.	Great Britain.	Ireland.*	United Kingdom.
1871-75	2,100	220	170	2,480	1,300	3,780
1876-80	1,930	210	140	2,270	1,240	3,510
1881-85	2,070	220	150	2,430	1,310	3,740
1886-1900	2,060	230	150	2,440	1,420	3,860
1891-95	2,110	230	140	2,480	1,290	3,770
1896-1900	2,160	240	140	2,540	1,330	3,870
1901-5	2,134	224	132	2,491	1,295	3,786

* Including Isle of Man.

Changes in Distribution of Live Stock

Tables 28 to 30 show the changes in the distribution of live stock in the United Kingdom in the last thirty years. The increase of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million head of cattle is distributed as follows :—England, 768,000; Ireland, 611,000; Scotland, 97,000; Wales, 98,000. In sheep, the decrease in England has been 3,734,000 head, and in Ireland 304,000; while in Wales and Scotland there have been increases of 575,000 and 18,000 head respectively. The changes in the distribution of pigs have been inconsiderable.

TABLE 31.—LIVE STOCK ENUMERATED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSANDS).

Table 31

145

Period.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.
1871-75 ..	9,932	33,192	3,782
1876-80 ..	9,864	31,906	3,506
1881-85 ..	10,225	28,631	3,737
1886-90 ..	10,569	29,690	3,860
1891-95 ..	11,121	31,753	3,770
1896-1900 ..	11,179	31,052	3,874
1901-5 ..	11,504	29,746	3,786

146

From estimates made by a special Committee of the Royal Statistical Society* it is possible to calculate the quantity of meat annually produced for consumption from home-fed cattle. Applying these estimates to the number of cattle enumerated, it appears that the quantity of meat produced from home-fed stock has increased by 93,000 tons in the case of beef and veal, and has declined by 35,000 tons in the case of mutton and increased by 1,000 tons in the case of pig-meats. (See Table 32.)

British Production
of Meats

TABLE 32.—ESTIMATED EQUIVALENT OF MEATS PRODUCED FROM HOME-FED LIVE STOCK (IN THOUSANDS OF TONS).

Table 32

Period.	Beef.	Mutton.	Pig-Meats.	Total.
1871-75 ..	584	332	277	1193
1876-80 ..	580	319	257	1156
1881-85 ..	601	286	274	1161
1886-90 ..	622	297	283	1202
1891-95 ..	654	318	276	1248
1896-1900 ..	658	311	284	1253
1901-5 ..	677	297	278	1252

147

Expressing these quantities in terms of the population, it seems that the production of British beef and veal has declined by about 5 lbs. per head of the population, or 12 %; mutton and lamb by 7½ lbs., or 32 %; and pig-meats by 4½ lbs., or 24 %. (See Table 33.)

Production of Meats
per head of the
Population

TABLE 33.—ESTIMATED PRODUCTION OF HOME-FED MEATS PER HEAD OF POPULATION.

Table 33

148

Period.	Beef and Veal.	Mutton and Lamb.	Pork, Bacon and Ham.	Total.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
1871-75 ..	40·8	23·2	19·3	83·3
1876-80 ..	38·3	21·1	17·0	76·4
1881-85 ..	38·0	18·2	17·3	73·5
1886-90 ..	37·8	18·0	17·2	73·0
1891-95 ..	38·0	18·5	16·1	72·6
1896-1900 ..	36·5	17·2	15·7	69·4
1901-5 ..	35·8	15·7	14·7	66·1

* Journal of the Royal Statistical Society, 1903.

TABLE 34.—NOS. EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE—1851 TO 1901.
COMPILED FROM THE CENSUS RETURNS AND SPECIAL INFORMATION BY THE RT. HON. CHARLES BOOTH, F.R.S.

1851.		1861.		1871.		1881.		1891.		1901.	
Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.
Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
ENGLAND AND WALES.											
Farm bailiffs, foremen.											
10.6	—	15.7	—	16.5	—	19.4	—	18.2	—	22.6	—
226.5	22.9	226.9	22.8	225.6	24.3	203.3	20.6	201.9	21.7	202.8	21.5
111.7	—	92.3	—	76.5	—	75.2	—	67.3	—	89.2	—
Farmers, graziers, sons, grandsons and other male relatives assisting on the farm.											
1097.8	143.5	1073.0	90.6	902.8	58.1	807.6	40.3	709.3	24.1	583.8	11.9
Agricultural labourers, farm servants, cottagers.											
12.5	—	25.6	—	23.3	—	22.8	—	21.6	—	25.4	—
7.8	—	8.9	—	7.9	—	8.2	—	9.4	—	12.0	—
76.5	2.2	94.1	1.9	119.6	2.6	145.2	3.1	174.3	5.0	211.0	5.1
Gardeners, nurserymen, seedsmen, florists. (See below, Table A.)											
3.8	.1	4.1	.1	4.7	.1	6.6	.1	6.2	.2	12.3	.3
1547.2	168.7	1540.6	115.4	1376.9	85.1	1288.3	64.1	1208.2	51.0	1159.1	38.8
Cattle, sheep, pig dealers, salesmen, drovers.											
7.5	—	9.3	—	8.8	—	8.3	—	8.1	—	8.1	—
13.4	—	11.7	—	12.7	—	3.0	.3	4.0	.7	2.1	.2
Dog, bird, animal keepers, dealers, serum destroyers, knackers, &c.											
20.9	—	21.0	—	21.5	—	11.3	.3	12.1	.7	10.2	.2
(A) As stated in Censuses.											
2.4	—	2.8	.1	5.1	.4	7.0	.8	—	—	—	—
69.6	2.2	76.7	1.3	95.8	2.2	63.6	2.3	174.3	5.0	123.1	5.1
4.5	—	14.6	—	18.7	—	74.6	.1	—	—	87.9	—
76.5	2.2	94.1	1.9	119.6	2.6	145.2	3.2	174.3	5.0	211.0	5.1
Gardeners (not domestic).											
SCOTLAND.											
Farm bailiffs, grieves, estate managers.											
2.2	—	3.2	—	2.9	—	3.5	—	3.2	—	4.7	—
48.6	4.9	54.6	6.4	48.5	6.9	48.1	7.1	47.5	6.8	45.6	7.8
24.2	—	17.6	—	19.6	—	16.2	—	17.1	—	17.7	—
Farmers, graziers, sons, grandsons and other male relatives assisting on the farm.											
140.2	54.7	125.9	40.9	111.0	42.8	91.8	44.2	85.1	22.0	73.8	19.8
Agricultural labourers, farm servants, cottagers.											
6.6	—	10.5	—	8.4	—	10.3	—	10.1	—	9.7	—
2.1	—	2.6	—	2.4	—	3.1	—	3.3	—	4.1	—
9.0	.3	10.6	.3	12.5	.3	14.9	.3	16.1	.3	19.3	.5
Shepherds.											
1.1	.2	1.1	—	.4	—	.7	—	1.1	—	2.2	—
234.0	60.1	226.1	47.6	205.7	50.0	188.6	51.6	183.5	29.1	177.1	28.1
Foresters, woodmen.											
1.2	—	1.2	.1	1.3	—	1.4	—	1.7	—	1.5	—
.8	.6	.7	—	.6	.1	.6	.1	.6	—	.1	—
Gardeners, nurserymen, seedsmen. (See below, Table B.)											
2.0	.6	1.9	.1	1.9	.1	2.0	.1	2.3	—	1.6	—
Agricultural machine and land service ; others in agriculture.											
3	—	.4	.1	.8	.1	.9	.1	.1	.3	11.6	.5
8.2	.3	8.4	.2	8.0	.2	2.8	.2	16.1	.3	7.7	—
5	—	1.8	—	3.7	—	11.2	.3	—	—	—	—
9.0	.3	10.6	.3	12.5	.3	14.9	.3	16.1	.3	19.3	.5

Some male relatives are apparently here in 1901 who were previously with the labourers. In 1901 female relatives are stated, but have been excluded from this Table.

The Census usually attempts to distinguish between domestic and non-domestic gardeners, but there is obvious overstepping. (See appended Table A.)

See note B, subjoined.

(B) As stated in Censuses.
Nurserymen, seedsmen, florists.
Gardeners (not domestic).
Gardeners (domestic).

TABLE 34—Continued.—NOS. EMPLOYED IN AGRICULTURE—1851 TO 1901—Continued.
COMPILED FROM THE CENSUS RETURNS AND SPECIAL INFORMATION BY THE RT. HON. CHARLES BOOTH, F.R.S.

1851.		1861.		1871.		1881.		1891.		1901.	
Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.	Males.	Fem.
Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.	Thous.
IRELAND.											
Farm bailiffs, land stewards.											
6-0	—	2-7	.2	3-3	—	3-1	—	2-1	—	1-9	—
384-1	19-7	413-5	27-4	392-2	31-6	382-3	59-6	348-4	68-6	328-9	70-5
(No separate return.)				16-5		189-6		212-7		214-3	
Farmers, graziers, sons, grandsons and other male relatives.											
850-1	144-2	602-2	69-7	503-7	71-1	293-3	35-9	251-7	21-9	212-2	14-0
Agricultural labourers, farm servants, cottagers. (See General labourers below.)											
27-9	2-7	23-7	2-4	2-0	—	6-7	.1	6-3	.2	5-5	.2
-6	—	-4	—	.5	—	.3	—	.2	—	.2	—
8-2	—	8-6	—	9-6	.1	8-8	.1	8-6	.2	9-3	.1
Woodmen.											
Nurserymen, seedsmen, florists, gardeners. (See below C.)											
—	—	—	—	—	.1	1-4	.1	1-6	.2	1-8	.6
Agricultural machine and land drainage service and others.											
1276-9	166-6	1051-1	99-7	933-8	102-9	885-5	95-8	831-6	91-1	774-1	85-4
Cattle, sheep, pig dealers, drovers.											
2-6	—	3-8	—	4-5	—	5-0	—	5-3	—	4-9	—
—	—	—	—	.3	.1	.1	—	.1	—	.2	—
2-6	—	3-8	—	4-8	.1	5-1	—	5-4	—	5-1	—
Dog, bird, animal keepers, knackers, &c.											
(C) As stated in Censuses.											
Nurserymen, seedsmen, florists.											
.3	—	.3	—	.3	—	.2	.1	.3	.1	.3	.1
7-9	—	8-3	—	8-7	.1	5-5	—	1-4	.1	4-7	.1
—	—	—	—	.6	—	3-1	—	6-9	—	4-3	—
Gardeners (domestic).											
8-2	—	8-0	—	9-6	.1	8-8	.1	8-6	.2	9-3	.2
57-0	1-8	771-8	17-7	156-8	21-0	134-0	9-8	114-0	5-0	115-5	2-3
General labourers.											
18-8	—	21-6	.2	22-7	—	26-0	—	23-5	—	29-2	—
659-2	47-5	695-0	56-6	666-3	62-8	633-7	87-3	597-8	97-1	577-3	99-8
135-9	—	109-9	—	102-6	—	281-0	—	297-1	—	321-2	—
Farm bailiffs, &c.											
Farmers, graziers.											
Farmers sons, grandsons and other male relatives.											
2088-1	342-4	1801-1	201-2	1523-5	172-0	1192-7	120-4	1046-1	68-0	869-8	45-7
47-0	2-7	59-8	2-4	33-7	—	39-8	.1	38-0	.2	40-6	.2
10-5	—	11-9	—	10-8	—	11-6	—	12-9	—	16-3	—
93-7	2-5	113-3	2-2	141-7	3-0	168-9	3-5	193-0	5-5	239-6	5-7
4-9	.3	5-2	.1	5-1	.2	8-7	.2	8-9	.4	16-3	.9
Agricultural machine and land drainage service and others.											
3058-1	395-4	2817-8	262-7	2505-4	238-0	2362-4	211-5	2223-3	171-2	2110-3	152-3
Cattle, sheep, pig dealers, salesmen, drovers.											
11-3	—	14-3	.1	14-6	—	14-7	—	15-1	—	14-5	—
14-2	—	12-4	—	13-6	.2	3-7	.4	4-7	.7	2-4	.2
25-5	—	26-7	.1	28-2	.2	18-4	.4	19-8	.7	16-9	.2
Dog, bird, animal keepers, knackers, &c.											

In 1871 Census, land stewards are with "land surveyors" and in 1881 they are with "others." The figures are here estimated.
These evidently overlap and must be combined in order to get a true comparison. The Census states that many returned as *general* labourers are really *agricultural*. (See below, Table C.)
See details below.

See notes as to each country.

The following Table, taken from Report by Mr. Wilson Fox on the Wages and Earnings of Agricultural Labourers in the United Kingdom (1900) illustrates the course of wages on a considerable number of farms in the United Kingdom between 1850-1903. The rates are expressed in percentages, the year 1900 being taken as representing 100 :—

Table 35

TABLE 35.—COURSE OF AGRICULTURAL WAGES IN UNITED KINGDOM.

	1850.	1860.	1870.	1880.	1890.	1900	1903
England and Wales (69 farms) ..	64	76	82	91	90	100	101
Scotland (6 farms)	50	60	71	85	91	100	103
Ireland (10 farms)	56	63	71	81	90	100	101

The 1904 returns from most of the farms received by the Board of Agriculture since the table was prepared show that on the whole wages have not changed since 1903.

(E)—IMPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AND THEIR RELATION TO THE HOME PRODUCTION.

The growth of imports of agricultural produce is shown in the following table :—

TABLE 36.—IMPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL FOODSTUFFS (IN THOUSAND £).

ARTICLE.	Foreign Countries.			British Possessions.			All Countries.			
	1885.	1895.	1905.	1885.	1895.	1905.	1875.	1885.	1895.	1905.
Corn and Grain ..	45,443	45,359	49,682	10,991	7,722	20,343	56,876	56,437	53,078	70,025
Meat	21,148	25,769	37,841	3,534	7,565	11,589	16,693	24,679	33,337	49,432
Eggs	2,927	3,835	6,693	5	168	119	2,560	2,931	4,003	6,812
Fruit	7,177	7,791	11,877	263	751	1,864	6,023	7,440	8,540	13,740
Vegetables	1,257	2,456	3,358	541	798	942	1,644	1,797	3,255	4,301
Butter (Margarine and Aleo-Margarine)	11,404	15,426	19,568	159	1,589	5,250	8,502	11,564	17,015	24,818
Cheese	2,828	2,117	1,332	1,242	2,559	5,008	4,710	4,069	4,675	6,340
Milk	800*	1,103	1,626	—	1	7	300*	800*	1,104	1,633
Lard	1,523	2,919	3,318	83	89	643	1,635	1,606	3,008	3,962
Oil-seed Cake and Cattle Food ..	2,015	1,567	2,085	16	37	228	1,834	2,030	1,604	2,311
Hay	†	343	239	†	61	143	†	†	404	383
Hops	981	642	453	20	2	4	1,188	1,002	645	456
Yeast	818	491	366	—	—	—	402	818	491	366
Sugar (Refined, Unrefined, and Molasses)	15,495	16,363	18,702	2,966	1,534	1,272	219,68	18,461	17,897	19,974
TOTAL ..	113,816	126,181	157,140	19,820	22,876	47,412	124,335	133,634	149,056	204,553

* Estimated.

† Figures for 1875 and 1885 not separately distinguished.

The increase has been continuous for the last thirty years, and is 80,000,000 sterling, or 66%, distributed, roughly, as follows :—

Corn has increased 13,000,000 sterling, equal to nearly 25 per cent.

Meat, 32,750,000 sterling, or just less than 200 per cent.

Dairy Produce (including margarine and lard), 21,500,000 sterling, or nearly 150 per cent.

Eggs, 4,250,000 sterling, or 160 per cent.

Vegetables, 2,750,000 sterling, or 170 per cent.

Fruit (including preserved fruits), 7,750,000 sterling, or 130 per cent.

Hops.—In 1905 the importation of Hops was exceptionally low. In 1904 it was of the value of £1,840,000. The average for 1901–5 was £826,000; for 1891–5, £900,000; and for 1881–5, £1,472,000.

If allowance were made for the unique fall in prices, the quantities imported would show a more considerable increase.

It is not possible to distinguish between foreign and Colonial imports in 1875. Comparing 1885 with 1905, it is seen that the increase of Colonial produce has been 27,500,000 sterling, or 140 per cent., and of foreign produce 43,000,000 sterling, or 38 per cent. The increase is distributed, roughly, as follows in the principal items:—

Corn and Grain has increased by 4,000,000 sterling, or 9 per cent. from foreign countries, and by 9,250,000 sterling, or 84 per cent. from British possessions.

Meat has increased by 16,500,000 sterling, or 79 per cent. from foreign countries, and by 8,000,000 sterling, or 230 per cent. from British possessions.

Butter, Cheese, etc., has increased by 9,500,000 sterling, or 60 per cent. from foreign countries, and by 9,500,000 sterling, or 630 per cent. from British possessions.

About one-half of the imported corn is wheat, the figures for which are given in the **Wheat Imports** following table:—

TABLE 37.—AVERAGE ANNUAL IMPORTS OF WHEAT AND FLOUR (IN EQUIVALENT OF GRAIN) INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN CWTs.). **Table 37**

	1871– 1875.	1876– 1880.	1881– 1885.	1886– 1890.	1891– 1895.	1896– 1900.	1901– 1905.
Russia	11,856	8,029	8,969	14,476	13,795	9,165	15,009
Denmark ¹	533	627	360	142	7	32	5
Germany	4,617	4,916	4,247	3,205	932	1,208	570
France	2,539	1,444	247	182	516	1,469	1,229
Austria-Hungary	462	1,384	2,029	2,303	1,585	1,516	1,017
Roumania	305	203	243	1,961	812	1,520	1,926
Turkey ²	644	413	577	398	752	846	372
Bulgaria	—	—	369	304	42	478	369
Egypt	1,390	1,720	707	346	269	34	4
U.S.A.	20,123	33,762	41,413	37,441	50,702	57,328	42,319
Argentina	55*	51	134	1,193	7,707	8,053	14,604
Chili	1,443	963	1,574	1,200	1,973	815	323
British N. America	3,725	3,788	2,706	3,351	4,923	7,544	10,535
British India	706	3,069	9,442	9,207	9,175	4,085	15,508
Australia ³	1,088	2,352	4,007	1,854	2,383	1,235	6,639
New Zealand ³	—	—	—	—	529	370	448
Other Countries	1,091	589	262	233	482	272	762
TOTAL	50,495	63,310	77,286	77,794	96,583	95,969	111,638

¹ Including Iceland and Greenland.

² Up to 1880 figures for Bulgaria are included with Turkey.

³ Figures for New Zealand were not given separately before 1886; in this table the figures are not separated before 1891.

* 2-year average, 1874–5.

The total increase is 62,000,000 cwt. (15,000,000 qrs.) or 124 per cent. Comparing 1871-1875 with 1901-1905, the total increase is distributed as follows: United States, 36 per cent.; Canada, 10 per cent.; India, 23 per cent.; Australia, 8 per cent.; Argentina, 25 per cent.; and Russia 5 per cent. There are small decreases in the receipts from Germany and France.

Table 38

TABLE 38.—PERCENTAGE OF QUANTITIES OF WHEAT AND FLOUR (IN EQUIVALENT OF GRAIN) IMPORTED INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	1871- 1875.	1876- 1880.	1881- 1885.	1886- 1890.	1891- 1895.	1896- 1900.	1901- 1905.
Russia	23.5	12.7	11.6	18.6	14.3	9.6	13.5
Denmark ¹	1.1	1.0	.5	.2	.0	.0	.0
Germany	9.1	7.8	5.5	4.1	1.0	1.3	.5
France	5.0	2.3	.3	.2	.5	1.5	1.1
Austria-Hungary	.9	2.2	2.6	3.0	1.6	1.6	.9
Roumania	.6	.3	.3	2.5	.8	1.6	1.7
Turkey ²	1.3	.7	.8	.5	.8	.9	.3
Bulgaria	—	—	.5	.4	.0	.5	.3
Egypt	2.7	2.7	.9	.5	.3	.0	.0
U.S.A.	39.8	53.3	53.6	48.1	52.5	59.7	37.9
Argentina	.1*	.1	.2	1.5	8.0	8.4	13.1
Chili	2.9	1.5	2.0	1.6	2.0	.8	.3
British N. America	7.4	6.0	3.5	4.3	5.1	7.9	9.4
British India	1.4	4.8	12.2	11.8	9.5	4.2	13.9
Australia ³	2.1	3.7	5.2	2.4	2.5	1.3	6.0
New Zealand ³	—	—	—	—	.6	.4	.4
Other Countries	2.2	.9	.3	.3	.5	.3	.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The proportion of our total requirements of wheat and flour during the years 1900-1905 obtained from the principal sources is shown in the following table, which is abstracted from the last number of *Agricultural Statistics*, issued by the Board of Agriculture.

Table 39

TABLE 39.—PERCENTAGE OF WHEAT AND FLOUR IMPORTS FROM PRINCIPAL COUNTRIES (1900-1905).

Country.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.	1905.
	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.	Per cent.
Argentina	19.0	8.2	4.2	12.2	18.5	21.1
Roumania	0.8	0.5	2.2	2.7	1.3	1.8
Russia	4.6	2.5	6.1	14.8	20.1	21.8
United States	58.2	66.2	60.2	40.0	15.7	12.7
Other Foreign Countries	5.1	3.3	3.7	3.3	5.2	4.9
Total Foreign Countries	87.7	80.7	76.4	73.0	60.8	62.3
Australia	3.0	6.1	3.9	—	9.6	10.1
Canada	8.1	8.5	11.3	12.4	7.6	7.3
India	—	3.3	8.2	14.6	21.6	20.0
Other British Possessions	1.2	1.4	0.2	—	0.4	0.3
Total British Possessions	12.3	19.3	23.6	27.0	39.2	37.7

¹ Including Iceland and Greenland.

² Up to 1880 figures for Bulgaria are included with Turkey.

³ Figures for New Zealand were not given separately before 1886; in this table the figures are not separated before 1891.

* 2-year average, 1874-5.

About 40 per cent. of the barley consumed in this country is imported; thirty years ago the **Barley Imports** percentage was less than 25.

169

TABLE 40.—IMPORTS OF BARLEY INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSAND CWTs).

Table 40

	Russia.	Denmark.	Germany.	France.	Austria-Hungary	Roumania.	Turkey (Including Cyprus)	United States.	Chili.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75 ..	1,976	1,252	1,170	2,785	41	777	2,280	28	50	689	11,048
1876-80 ..	2,368	1,617	2,482	1,159	24	1,239	1,644	501	63	921	12,018
1881-85 ..	4,454	806	1,399	1,418	334	3,169	1,128	161	101	1,055	14,025
1886-90 ..	8,129	728	1,344	624	450	2,568	1,197	255	185	1,187	16,667
1891-95 ..	11,592	372	550	604	308	2,190	3,304	1,156	502	1,312	21,890
1896-1900 ..	7,893	158	281	312	153	2,760	3,558	3,042	572	1,298	20,027
1901-05 ..	10,483	224	553	295	385	3,461	4,029	2,882	420	1,710	24,442

170

The total increase of barley imports in the thirty years is 13,000,000 cwt. (1,250,000 qrs.). Comparing 1871-75 with 1901-05, the change in the sources of supply is distributed as follows:—Russia, an increase from 18 to 43 per cent of our total barley imports—it was 53 per cent. in 1891-5; Turkey, a decrease from 21 to 17 per cent.; France, a decrease from 25 to 1 per cent.; Germany, a decrease from 11 to 2 per cent.; Denmark, a decrease from 11 to 1 per cent.; United States, an increase from 3-10ths of 1 per cent. to 12 per cent.

TABLE 41.—PERCENTAGE OF QUANTITIES OF BARLEY IMPORTED FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

Table 41

	Russia.	Denmark.	Germany.	France.	Austria-Hungary.	Roumania.	Turkey (Including Cyprus)	United States.	Chili.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75 ..	17.9	11.3	10.6	25.2	.4	7.0	20.6	.3	.5	6.2	100.0
1876-80 ..	19.7	13.5	20.6	9.6	.2	10.3	13.7	4.2	.5	7.7	100.0
1881-85 ..	31.8	5.8	10.0	10.1	2.4	22.6	8.0	1.1	.7	7.5	100.0
1886-90 ..	48.8	4.4	8.1	3.7	2.7	15.4	7.2	1.5	1.1	7.1	100.0
1891-95 ..	52.96	1.70	2.51	2.76	1.41	10.00	15.09	5.28	2.29	5.99	100.0
1896-1900 ..	39.4	.8	1.4	1.5	.7	13.8	17.8	15.2	2.9	6.5	100.0
1901-05 ..	42.9	.9	2.3	1.2	1.6	14.1	16.5	11.8	1.7	7.0	100.0

171

Imported oats represent about 24 per cent. of our total requirements, as compared with about **Oats Imports** 14 per cent. twenty years ago.

TABLE 42.—IMPORTS OF OATS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM (IN THOUSAND CWTs.).

Table 42

	Russia.	Sweden.	Germany.	Roumania.	United States.	British North America.	New Zealand.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75 ..	4,699	3,954	926	13*	13	332	—	1,700	11,637
1876-80 ..	6,669	3,997	612	9	69	716	62	705	12,839
1881-85 ..	7,794	3,616	333	43	343	371	78	438	13,016
1886-90 ..	11,203	2,358	311	57	518	227	75	338	15,087
1891-95 ..	9,808	1,802	487	68	938	607	468	1,167	15,345
1896-1900 ..	6,885	417	714	79	6,769	1,583	77	480	17,004
1901-05 ..	9,873	113	1,716	1,286	1,801	748	306	1,318	17,161

172

* 2-Year Average (1874-75).

173

The imports of oats have increased by 5,500,000 cwts. (about 500,000 qrs.). Comparing the sources of supply in 1871-75 and 1901-05, the changes are as follows :—Russia, an increase from 40½ to 57½ per cent. of the total oats imports—during 1886-90 the Russian supply was 74 per cent. of our total imports ; Sweden, a decrease from 34 to 7 per cent.

Table 43

TABLE 43.—PERCENTAGE OF QUANTITIES OF OATS IMPORTED FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

	Russia.	Sweden.	Germany.	Roumania.	United States.	British North America.	New Zealand.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75	40.4	34.0	8.0	.1	.1	2.8	—	14.6	100.0
1876-80	51.9	31.1	4.8	.1	.5	5.6	.5	5.5	100.0
1881-85	59.9	27.8	2.6	.3	2.6	2.8	.6	3.4	100.0
1886-90	74.3	15.6	2.1	.4	3.4	1.5	.5	2.2	100.0
1891-95	63.9	11.7	3.2	.4	6.1	4.0	3.1	7.6	100.0
1896-1900	40.5	2.4	4.2	.5	39.8	9.3	.5	2.8	100.0
1901-05	57.5	.7	10.0	7.5	10.5	4.3	1.8	7.7	100.0

174

Relation to Home Production

The following table shows the relation between the consumption of home-grown and imported wheat, barley and oats. Deductions are made on account of seed requirements in the case of home-grown produce.

175

Table 44

TABLE 44.—ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM DISTINGUISHING IMPORTS AND HOME PRODUCE (IN MILLIONS OF BUSHELS).

		Imported.			Home Produce.			Total Consumption.		
		Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.
1871-75 ..		94	25	33	87	76	151	181	101	184
1876-80 ..		118	27	37	72	78	148	190	105	185
1881-85 ..		144	31	37	76	81	154	220	112	191
1886-90 ..		145	37	43	72	75	152	217	112	195
1891-95 ..		180	49	44	55	69	161	235	118	205
1896-1900 ..		179	45	49	58	68	150	237	113	199
1901-05 ..		208	55	49	49	62	160	257	117	209

176

Thirty years ago home-grown wheat represented 48 per cent. of the total consumption ; it is now 19 per cent. In the case of barley, the percentage of home production to the total consumption has fallen from 75 to 53 ; the fall in the case of oats has been from 82 to 76.

TABLE 45.—SHOWING ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF WHEAT, BARLEY AND OATS PER HEAD OF POPULATION, DISTINGUISHING IMPORTS AND HOME PRODUCE (IN BUSHELS).

Table 45

177

	Imported.			Home-Grown.			Total Consumption.		
	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.	Wheat.	Barley.	Oats.
1871-75 ..	2.93	.77	1.04	2.69	2.37	4.71	5.62	3.14	5.75
1876-80 ..	3.48	.79	1.09	2.13	2.31	4.36	5.61	3.10	5.45
1881-85 ..	4.07	.89	1.06	2.14	2.27	4.33	6.21	3.16	5.39
1886-90 ..	3.93	1.01	1.17	1.94	2.03	4.12	5.87	3.04	5.29
1891-95 ..	4.68	1.27	1.14	1.44	1.78	4.18	6.12	3.05	5.32
1896-1900 ..	4.43	1.11	1.21	1.44	1.69	3.71	5.87	2.80	4.92
1901-05 ..	4.91	1.30	1.16	1.16	1.46	3.77	6.06	2.76	4.93

178

The above table shows that the total consumption of wheat has increased from 5.61 bushels per head of the population to 6.1 or 8 per cent. (per annum) in the last thirty years. The fall in the case of home-grown wheat has been from 2.7 to 1.2 bushels, or by 64 per cent.

From Tables 46 & 47 it will be seen that there has been considerable change in the sources of the British maize supply. **Maize Imports**

TABLE 46.—IMPORTS OF MAIZE INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.
(In THOUSAND CWTs.)

Table 46

—	Russia.	Roumania.	Turkey.	United States.	Argentine Republic.	British N. America.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75..	975	886	2,747	12,115	25*	1,772	1,157	19,663
1876-80..	705	1,820	2,378	29,416	27	2,414	339	37,098
1881-85..	1,961	7,439	705	15,648	242	1,155	811	27,961
1886-90..	3,547	7,900	164	21,669	2,844	1,769	519	33,436
1891-95..	5,064	10,632	624	11,684	2,649	1,368	863	32,884
1896-1900	1,966	4,756	33	36,484	7,501	5,049	133	55,924
1901-05..	3,093	7,435	940	14,521	16,955	2,152	1,097	46,193

* Mean of Two Years.

We import 27,000,000 cwt. more maize now than thirty years ago ; in the last five years the imports are nearly 5,000,000 cwt. less than in the five years 1896-1900. Thirty years ago the United States supplied 62 per cent. of the total ; to-day it sends 31 per cent. only. The Argentine Republic has increased her supply from 1-10th of one per cent of our total requirements to 37 per cent. The Roumanian supply has grown from 4½ to 16 per cent., having touched 32 per cent. in the period 1891-1895.

TABLE 47.—PERCENTAGE OF QUANTITIES OF MAIZE IMPORTED FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

Table 47

180

—	Russia.	Roumania.	Turkey.	United States.	Argentine Republic.	British N. America.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75..	5.0	4.5	14.0	61.6	.1	9.0	5.9	100.0
1876-80..	1.9	4.9	6.4	79.3	.1	6.5	.9	100.0
1881-85..	7.0	26.6	2.5	56.00	.9	4.1	2.9	100.0
1886-90..	10.6	23.6	.5	49.9	8.5	5.3	1.6	100.0
1891-95..	15.4	32.3	1.9	35.5	8.1	4.2	2.6	100.0
1896-1900	3.5	8.5	.1	65.2	13.4	9.0	.3	100.0
1901-05..	6.7	16.1	2.0	31.4	36.7	4.7	2.4	100.0

The Board of Trade Returns relating to meats include imports of both live and dead meats. In the following table allowance has been made for the live animals imported by converting them into their respective equivalents of dead meats, according to a scale supplied by the Board of Agriculture.

Table 48

TABLE 48.—IMPORTS OF LIVE AND DEAD MEAT.

Year.	Beef and Veal.		Mutton.		Pig Meat.		Total Meat (including Meat unenumerated).	
	Total.	Per head.	Total.	Per head.	Total.	Per head.	Total.	Per head.
	Tons.	lbs.	Tons.	lbs.	Tons.	lbs.	Tons.	lbs.
1869 ..	64,599	4·67	—	—	50,028	3·62	139,000	10·05
1870 ..	60,335	4·32	—	—	46,017	3·30	132,000	9·46
1871 ..	75,856	5·38	—	—	73,777	5·24	190,000	13·49
1872 ..	53,676	3·77	—	—	111,811	7·86	208,000	14·62
1873 ..	61,881	4·31	—	—	167,895	11·69	271,000	18·87
1874 ..	60,493	4·17	—	—	149,003	10·27	251,000	17·28
1875 ..	65,702	4·48	—	—	148,885	10·16	258,000	17·60
1876 ..	86,912	5·86	—	—	180,187	12·16	316,000	21·32
1877 ..	83,825	5·59	—	—	157,213	10·49	295,000	19·69
1878 ..	105,603	6·97	—	—	237,025	15·64	397,000	26·20
1879 ..	109,368	7·14	—	—	270,560	17·67	442,000	28·86
1880 ..	161,180	10·43	—	—	289,755	18·75	517,000	33·45
1881 ..	143,940	9·22	—	—	251,665	16·14	459,000	29·43
1882 ..	123,886	7·88	42,675	2·72	160,533	10·21	353,000	22·46
1883 ..	187,933	11·88	44,568	2·82	205,588	12·99	467,000	29·51
1884 ..	172,555	10·82	53,011	3·32	189,120	11·86	435,000	27·28
1885 ..	164,030	10·20	50,987	3·17	222,931	13·87	464,000	28·86
1886 ..	141,101	8·70	63,926	3·94	230,194	14·20	457,000	28·19
1887 ..	126,864	7·76	68,465	4·19	218,727	13·39	441,000	26·99
1888 ..	161,628	9·82	78,276	4·75	205,404	12·48	473,000	28·73
1889 ..	251,001	15·12	81,332	4·90	244,807	14·75	612,000	36·87
1890 ..	335,011	20·02	97,396	5·82	256,208	15·85	708,000	42·31
1891 ..	297,381	17·63	96,855	5·74	253,493	15·02	661,000	39·17
1892 ..	321,139	18·88	90,725	5·33	274,938	16·16	703,000	41·27
1893 ..	237,874	13·86	104,579	6·10	227,872	13·28	585,000	34·02
1894 ..	298,641	17·25	134,178	7·76	262,594	15·17	713,000	41·06
1895 ..	284,940	16·31	170,706	9·77	293,099	16·77	770,000	43·93
1896 ..	356,392	20·24	172,750	9·81	328,184	18·63	880,000	49·72
1897 ..	383,527	21·78	182,032	10·24	365,781	20·57	959,000	53·89
1898 ..	366,891	20·33	190,605	10·56	425,868	23·60	1,012,000	56·31
1899 ..	382,105	20·98	194,108	10·66	436,845	23·98	1,046,000	57·60
1900 ..	404,095	21·99	183,702	10·00	419,400	22·82	1,045,000	57·30
1901 ..	420,846	22·69	194,140	10·47	433,579	23·38	1,091,000	59·53
1902 ..	358,474	19·14	195,265	10·43	371,631	19·84	971,000	51·84
1903 ..	408,180	21·58	213,038	11·26	362,087	19·14	1,028,758	54·38
1904 ..	430,356	22·45	187,002	9·76	377,532	19·69	1,037,452	54·12
1905 ..	471,809	24·35	197,049	10·17	376,450	19·43	1,089,060	56·21

In Table 49 the results are expressed in five-yearly periods.

TABLE 49.—AVERAGE ANNUAL IMPORTS OF LIVE AND DEAD MEAT.

Table 49

Period.	Beef and Veal.		Mutton.		Pig Meat.		Total Meat (including Meat unenumerated).	
	Total. tons.	Per head. lbs.	Total. tons.	Per head. lbs.	Total. tons.	Per head. lbs.	Total. tons.	Per head. lbs.
1871-75 ..	63,522	4.42	—	—	130,274	9.04	235,600	16.37
1876-80 ..	109,378	8.00	—	—	226,948	14.94	393,400	25.90
1881-85 ..	158,469	10.00	47,810	3.01	205,967	13.01	435,600	27.51
1886-90 ..	203,121	12.28	77,879	4.72	231,068	14.13	538,200	32.62
1891-95 ..	287,995	16.79	119,409	6.94	262,399	15.28	686,400	39.89
1896-1900 ..	378,602	21.06	184,639	10.25	395,216	21.92	988,400	54.96
1901-05 ..	417,933	22.04	197,299	10.42	384,256	20.30	1,043,454	55.22

This shows that in the last thirty years the total imports of meat have increased by 808,000 tons per annum, or 330 per cent. The increase per head of the population has been by 39 lbs. per annum, or nearly 250 per cent. The principal sources of supply are given in the following tables :—

TABLE 50.—IMPORTS OF LIVE AND DEAD MEATS (OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS, IN EQUIVALENT OF DEAD MEAT) INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Table 50

(Thousands of Tons.)

Period.	Sweden and Norway.	Denmark.	Germany.	Holland.	Belgium.	France.	United States.	Argentine Republic.	Canada.	Australasia.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-5 ..	2.6	10.7	42.4	30.3	4.3	1.5	116.0	—	3.5	11.4	11.0	239.1
1876-80 ..	2.3	17.0	37.6	26.1	3.2	.9	279.7	.1	10.5	6.5	13.8	397.6
1881-5 ..	6.1	28.8	11.0	26.5	3.1	.5	275.5	3.2	30.0	19.0	15.2	447.9
1886-90 ..	6.6	43.6	21.8	34.2	3.5	.5	328.6	17.2	45.3	36.2	8.3	546.5
1891-5 ..	3.9	45.3	1.4	24.7	4.2	1.1	428.5	37.5	48.8	87.7	4.8	688.1
1896-1900 ..	2.1	64.2	1.1	41.2	3.0	1.0	565.9	92.3	69.5	144.8	3.0	988.7
1901-5 ..	.9	82.2	1.1	50.1	5.0	1.2	531.3	152.4	91.8	121.5	4.0	1044.3

Thirty years ago, of the total estimated imports of live and dead meat, 116,000 tons, or 49 %, came from the United States, and 105,000 tons, or 44 %, from European countries, principally Germany and Holland. Other countries sent only a trifling amount—Canada 3,500 tons, and Australasia 11,400 tons. During the last 5 years the imports from the United States averaged 531,000 tons, or rather more than 50 %; the imports from Continental countries amounted to 143,000 tons, or 13 %, of which 132,000 tons came from Holland and Denmark. The Argentine Republic now sends an average of 152,000 tons, or 14 %; Canada 92,000 tons, or 9 %; and Australasia 122,000 tons, or 12 % of the total.

In the following three tables the imports of meats of every description are classified as far as possible into three groups—(1) beef and veal, (2) mutton and lamb, (3) pig meats. In making this division it should be noted that, prior to 1890, meats preserved “otherwise than by salting” have been included entirely with beef and veal, though it is known that some, though probably a small quantity of mutton was included under this head. Also throughout the whole period, “meats, other sorts,” have been included with beef and veal. “Meats unenumerated,” which have been included in the total, are not included in any of the later tables.

Table 51

TABLE 51.—IMPORTS OF BEEF AND VEAL* (LIVE AND DEAD, IN EQUIVALENT OF DEAD) INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.
(In Thousands of Tons.)

Period.	Denmark.	Germany.	Holland.	United States.	Argentine Republic.	Canada.	Australasia.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-5 ..	6.7	16.1	18.6	10.5	—	.6	11.3	18.5	82.5
1876-80 ..	13.2	9.4	12.0	73.7	.1	7.3	6.5	15.8	138.4
1881-5 ..	21.5	6.4	10.8	104.7	.5	19.1	9.1	20.5	192.9
1886-90 ..	18.0	1.8	10.6	154.1	.9	28.9	7.4	12.1	234.3
1891-5 ..	2.3	.2	2.1	231.6	7.2	31.0	19.1	4.3	297.9
1896-1900 ..	1.8	.2	.4	273.7	30.7	36.3	42.3	2.6	388.4
1901-5 ..	2.4	.3	.9	280.7	77.0	43.5	19.3	6.0	430.4

* From 1871-89 the imports of “Meat, preserved otherwise than by salting,” and from 1890 those of “Meat, other sorts (other than Bacon and Hams)” are included; both these contain a small portion of meat which is not beef.

Thirty years ago the total imports of beef and veal are estimated to have amounted to 10,500 tons, or 13 % of the whole. The imports from the Continent amount to about 56,000 tons, or 68 %. During the past five years the imports from the United States have reached an average of 281,000 tons, or 65 % of the total, while the imports from Continental countries have all but disappeared. In addition to the United States, a supply of 77,000 tons per annum has been obtained from the Argentine Republic, representing 18 % of our total imports, and from Canada 43,000 tons, or 10 % of the total.

Table 52

TABLE 52.—IMPORTS OF MUTTON AND LAMB* (LIVE AND DEAD, IN EQUIVALENT OF DEAD) INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.
(Thousands of Tons.)

Period.	Germany.	Holland.	Belgium.	United States.	Argentine Republic.	Canada.	Australasia.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-5 ..	11.6	9.6	3.4	—	—	—	—	1.1	25.7
1876-80 ..	11.5	9.5	2.2	1.3	—	1.2	—	1.9	27.8
1881-85 ..	13.0	12.6	1.8	3.0	2.6	2.0	9.8	3.1	47.6
1886-90 ..	8.7	15.1	1.4	.3	16.2	1.6	28.7	4.6	77.0
1891-95 ..	.8	9.2	1.9	4.0	30.0	2.5	68.2	2.5	119.4
1896-1900 ..	.1	13.8	—	4.8	60.5	1.8	101.9	1.4	184.5
1901-05 ..	—	14.2	.1	7.3	70.6	2.0	101.4	1.4	197.3

* Before 1889 a small quantity of mutton was included in “Meats preserved otherwise than by salting,” and is not allowed for in this table.

During 1871-75, practically all the mutton and lamb enumerated came from the Continent; in the past five years Holland has been the only Continental country from which mutton and lamb has been obtained. Practically seven-eighths of the total imports are now obtained from Argentina and Australasia. The former send an average of 71,000 tons, or 37 % of the total imports, the latter send 101,000 tons, or 51 % of the total.

TABLE 53.—IMPORTS OF PIG-MEATS* INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM.
(In Thousands of Tons.)

Table 53

Period.	Denmark.	Germany.	Holland.	United States.	Canada.	Other Countries.	Total.
1871-75	3.2	14.5	.1	104.0	2.8	2.0	126.5
1876-80	2.0	16.5	.5	202.6	1.8	1.4	224.7
1881-85	4.4	21.3	1.6	167.2	8.8	1.6	204.7
1886-90	22.0	11.1	6.4	173.8	14.7	3.5	231.9
1891-95	40.8	.2	8.0	191.5	15.2	5.4	262.0
1896-1900	59.9	.7	15.4	282.4	31.1	5.3	395.2
1901-05	75.7	.6	21.3	235.1	45.9	5.4	384.2

* Live Pigs not included.

In pig meats of all descriptions, pork, bacon, hams, &c., the United States was, and continues to be, by far the most important country from which we obtain this class of provision. During 1871-75 they sent 104,000 tons, or 82 % of the total imports; during the past five years their imports amounted to an average of 235,000 tons, or 61 % of the total. Denmark now sends 76,000 tons, or 20 % of the total; Holland 21,000 tons, or 6 %; and Canada 46,000 tons, or 12 %.

Table 54 shows the relation between the quantities of home-fed and imported meats consumed in the United Kingdom.

Relation to Home Production

TABLE 54.—ESTIMATED AVERAGE ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF HOME-FED AND IMPORTED MEATS.

Table 54

Period.	Home-fed.		Imported.		Total.	
	Total.	Per head.	Total.	Per head.	Total.	Per head.
	'000 tons.	lbs.	'000 tons.	lbs.	'000 tons.	lbs.
1871-75	1,193	83.3	236	16.4	1,429	99.7
1876-80	1,156	76.4	393	25.9	1,549	102.3
1881-85	1,161	73.5	436	27.5	1,597	101.0
1886-90	1,202	73.0	538	32.6	1,740	105.6
1891-95	1,248	72.6	686	39.9	1,934	112.5
1896-1900	1,253	69.4	988	55.0	2,241	124.4
1901-05	1,204	67.4	1,043	55.2	2,297	122.6

Imported meats represented only 15 per cent. of the total consumption thirty years ago; they now represent 45 per cent.

(F)—EXPERIENCES OF FARMERS.

This sub-section of the Report, being "Experiences of Farmers," is an analysis and summary of the actual oral and written statements of Witnesses without comment of any kind by the Committee. The summary follows throughout the words of the Witnesses, and therefore expresses their views on the state of the industry.

Character of Evidence

The oral and written statements upon which the summary is based come from 2,251 farmers and agriculturists generally, holding and owning farms whose total area is about 1,900,000 acres distributed through the various divisions of the United Kingdom as, explained in paras. 8-10. This oral and written evidence is published in detail in Sections III. and V. The general arrangement of the evidence is described in the Table of Contents at the opening of this volume, and the reference to any particular subject may be found in the Index at the end of the volume.

(1) CORN CROPS.*

Here and there isolated farmers state that they can still grow wheat at a profit, but complaints of the unremunerative character of this crop in recent years are so numerous as to entirely outweigh such cases. "Thousands of acres," says a Bedfordshire witness, "which ought to be producing wheat and straw, at present are growing nothing." "Mine," says the representative of the Boston branch of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture, "is certainly one of the most prosperous agricultural districts in the United Kingdom, but during the last 10, 15 or 20 years corn could not be grown profitably, and the agriculturists have turned from it to potatoes mainly, market gardening and small seed growing." "When I commenced business," says another Lincolnshire witness, "the idea was to get as great an acreage as possible under wheat. Now it is grown as little as possible, and then on account of the straw." Formerly nearly one-fourth of his arable land grew wheat every year. A witness from Norfolk says in his case wheat has been steadily going out of rotation. Twenty years ago it was 30 per cent. of the arable land, now it is only 3. In Berkshire, according to the representative of the Berkshire Chamber of Agriculture, farmers are said to grow less wheat every year, and millers complain of the difficulty in obtaining English wheat. The representative of the Huntingdonshire Agricultural Society indicates how wheat, which should be their best arable crop, has given place to root growing and market gardening, and the evidence shows how in Gloucestershire, Dorset, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, thousands of acres have gone out of wheat cultivation. Welsh witnesses say that much of the land in Wales is wholly unsuited for growing wheat, and some farmers find that it answers their purpose better to buy flour rather than grow wheat under adverse conditions. The Irish evidence is practically unanimous. In districts where wheat-growing was the staple industry, it has now been abandoned (see Map of Distribution and Reduction in Wheat Growth, para. 62).

* The term "corn" is that adopted in the British Agricultural Returns as including wheat, barley, oats, peas, beans, maize and rice.

Farmers make the general complaint that practically throughout the United Kingdom it is **Barley** increasingly difficult to grow barley at a remunerative price. In certain counties, such as Lincolnshire, Hampshire, Cambridgeshire, Northumberland and the West Riding of Yorkshire, however, barley is spoken of as having to a certain extent taken the place of wheat, and some consider it to be the best average crop for prices. A number of witnesses from different parts of the country point out that barley is a particularly uncertain crop, as its success depends more on the weather than any other. Others have stated that the constant cultivation of barley on the same land without the customary alternation of wheat has caused that land to become "barley sick." In Ireland the conditions, as stated by witnesses, are somewhat different. In the province of Leinster barley is grown in considerable quantity in place of wheat, but in the other provinces the amount grown is insignificant, while in many districts it is not grown at all. It appears that in the south-east of Ireland, in Queen's Co., Kildare, Carlow and Tipperary, the small farmers depend almost entirely upon barley-growing.

Oats is regarded by many farmers as their best-paying cereal crop. They find the cost of produc- **Oats** tion less, the return quicker, and the crop less liable to damage from weather than is the case with other cereals. Hence oats has taken the place of wheat to a certain extent. A Bedfordshire farmer states that he is growing more oats than formerly, and other Bedfordshire evidence indicates that the land is well suited to oats "if sufficient encouragement could be given to cultivate it." A Cambridgeshire farmer speaks of increased oats and reduced wheat cultivation because of the low prices of wheat. Hertfordshire farmers also speak of the greater suitability of their land for oats than for wheat. A Dorsetshire farmer, representing the Winfrith Farmers' Club, says he has found that oats, taking advantage of the straw and everything else, is a more profitable crop than any other cereal. "One of our best-paying crops," says the representative of the Berkshire Chamber, "is oats, which alone has held its own. We grow more oats to-day than 20 years ago. Oats have not been affected by foreign competition to anything like the extent that wheat has. Oat straw is practically as valuable as wheat straw. We make within 2s. 6d. and 3s. a ton, the same price as wheat straw. A large quantity of winter oats is grown in our neighbourhood, and one of the biggest growers grows almost entirely for the straw." Evidence from Hampshire also indicates that oats has taken the place of wheat, and the representative of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Chamber says that oats is practically the only grain crop grown in his district. "We all have to grow some grain crop on our arable land, and we lose less by growing oats than by any other crop." In Ireland oats is spoken of as the chief cereal, "being about 84 per cent. of all the cereals," and, owing to climatic and other conditions, the most important from a national point of view. The Chairman of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Association says:—"Oats are remunerative in spite of large importations, because they are much better grown." "Oats are not grown nearly as much as they were, but they are still grown where wheat has disappeared." Lessened production is, indeed, the experience of most Irish witnesses. A Kerry farmer says that the remuneration of the crop is nearly 30 per cent. less than formerly. "We can grow good grain and continued growing oats longer than anything else, but nobody wants home produce." A Mayo farmer says:—"A great part of Western Ireland is in the hands of small tenants, who cultivate their petty holdings with their families, and they probably carry on just as much tillage as their forefathers; but otherwise tillage is being abandoned. The reason is that oats are only 5s. a cwt., and other crops in proportion." Reduced oats production is also reported by farmers from Cavan, Queen's County, Kerry, Londonderry and other parts of Ireland.

The evidence reflects the general decrease in the cultivation of beans and peas; where there **Beans and Peas** has been an increase it has apparently been in substitution of other corn crops, chiefly wheat. A

Experiences of Farmers.

205

Bedfordshire corn merchant speaks of sanfoin and other seeds taking the place of beans. A Suffolk farmer says the beans he grows on the "very heavy land" of his district "do not pay very well." Heavy land in Buckingham formerly under wheat and beans has now been sown down to grass, though, in the words of a Warwickshire farmer, "it takes many years before it can be called good pasture."

**Causes of Change
as to Wheat**

The main causes alleged for the decay of wheat-growing fall under two heads. Nearly all the witnesses put in the first place the fall of prices. The time when they began to feel the fall of prices acutely varies from 1879 to 1885. Witnesses also attach great importance to the difficulties in regard to labour, many of them stating that the cost of labour makes it impossible for them to grow wheat. The scarcity of labour in the rural districts is in most instances attributed to the superior attractions of industrial life, railway work, etc. While witnesses contend that the wages actually earned in industrial occupations are rarely, taking all things into account, higher than those which the agricultural labourer can make, they are unanimous as to the impression which prevails amongst the labourers that they can do better by deserting the rural districts.

206

**Causes of Change
as to Barley**

The principal reason given by farmers for the decline in their cultivation of barley-growing is the fall in prices which they attribute to the increase of foreign importation. Many add that the repeal of the Malt Tax enabled brewers to use foreign substitutes for barley. A Bedfordshire witness says:—"Since the abolition of the Malt Tax the premium on best barley has been largely lost." According to an Oxfordshire witness the brewers use foreign barley because it is cheaper. Others say the same and add that the foreign barley yields a brighter ale. In Scotland foreign importation is much felt. Witnesses from Aberdeen, as well as other parts, complain of the importation of cheap barley from the Continent. In Ireland a farmer from Queen's Co. gives the following reasons for the decrease in barley-growing:—(1) Fall in prices; (2) scarcity of labour; (3) deteriorated quality of labour; (4) rise in wages.

207

**Causes of Change
as to Oats**

Similar causes are said to have caused changes in the cultivation of oats, that is to say—low prices, the lack of labour and the higher wages now paid, and increasing importations of oats and oatmeal from Germany, Russia, North America, etc. Oats which fetched 1s. to 1s. 4d. per stone forty years ago now sell at 7d. and 8d. Labour has generally risen in price and especially since 1894. A Lanarkshire firm of millers points to the oatmeal and rolled oats made in the United States and Canada from oats grown in those countries at less cost than English oats can be produced. An Aberdeen firm of pearl barley manufacturers speak of cheap and inferior oatmeal "being flung on our markets from the United States and Canada to the detriment of our farmers, who consequently get lower prices for their oats." A Perth miller says this imported oatmeal is sold at an average of 4s. per sack cheaper than the meal made from home-grown oats. "The quality of foreign oatmeal is very much inferior to home oatmeal, so much so that people cease using oatmeal altogether." A Glasgow firm, who used to buy all their meal in the North of Ireland a short time ago, are getting from one mill in Canada over 2,000 tons of oatmeal per annum and purchase no meal here now. To produce the oats to fulfil this one firm's needs would require 3,700 acres of Ulster land at 130 stone per acre. The effect of Canadian competition on the milling of oats is shown by a Galway farmer, who used himself to sell 400 or 500 tons in a year; he says he cannot sell 100 now, and has two mills closed; last year he bought all his oatmeal from Canada. The partial failure of the United States maize crop in 1889, 1900 and 1901 led to an increase in the production of oats in some parts of this country. The importation of maize is also said to have had a deterrent effect upon the growth of oats in the United Kingdom as a feeding stuff. An Aberdeenshire farmer says of maize that it competes with oats, "the main crop, and the only kind of corn the greater part of the North of Scotland can produce."

208

**Causes of Change
as to Peas and**

The chief cause of decreased cultivation of peas and beans would seem to be low prices, and the importation of competing peas and beans from France, Holland, Germany, Egypt, Smyrna,

etc., is especially dwelt upon as a cause deterrent to the expansion of British production. A firm of Northampton corn millers speak of these importations as sold here "under cost price." "Leith and Glasgow," says a firm of Norfolk grain shippers, "can buy Dutch peas, rape seed, etc., at less money than we can compete with them. Again, freight, Hamburg to Lynn, is 6s. per ton; Lynn to Leith, 10s. 10d. per ton." A Wiltshire farmer relates his experience as follows: "I showed a good sample of beans to a buyer, a neighbour of mine, the other day. He said, 'Your beans are in better condition than I expected they would be after such bad harvest weather, but I am sorry I cannot buy them off you as I can buy beans from Liverpool delivered here into my siding for less money than I can offer you, and what is more, I can sell them, which is all I want. I have not bought any English beans this year.'" Attempts have been made to export British peas to the United States, but the high duties stood in the way of successful trade.

Witnesses do not as a rule state precisely under what conditions they think that wheat-growing would be remunerative. Their statements generally take the form of expressing a general opinion as to the efficacy of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, but they are unanimous that in order to obtain a substantially increased acreage under wheat prices would have to be considerably higher than they are at present. A view very generally expressed is that of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture. "The view of the Chamber," says its representative, "is that the suggested duties of 2s. are not more than the ordinary farmer pays in local taxation. . . We pay in local burdens and they would pay by a duty; all people who sell in our market, living beyond the country, should pay something for the use of that market." On the other hand, the view is also very general that the indirect advantages they would obtain from Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, especially by a differential duty on flour, would help them. Some witnesses are also strongly in favour of the application of the principle of a bounty, either in the form of a direct bounty on wheat-growing, or else by an indirect application of the same principle, either by expending the proceeds of the wheat duty in some way helpful to the agriculturist, such as in the relief of rates. Many of them are of opinion that they could at any rate hold their own if measures were devised on these lines. Very strong opinions, however, are expressed against a direct bounty on wheat-growing, whether in proportion to the acreage sown or in proportion to the wheat grown.

Suggestions as to
Wheat

210

211

Witnesses give, as a rule, a general opinion on the probable effect of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals on barley cultivation. The majority foresee a slight advantage, and though few see any considerable advantage, the number that are opposed to the duty or consider that it would be of no advantage at all is very small. The principal point to which attention is drawn is the differentiation between feeding and malting barley. Many farmers would like to see barley for feeding admitted free while barley for malting is taxed. A Midland farmer says that nothing should be done to check the supply of cheap cattle feed, but fine barley, for which our soil is suitable, should be encouraged. A similar opinion is expressed by other witnesses. A Wiltshire witness goes further and says that he would rather see all barley admitted free than that grinding barley should be taxed. The opinion is also expressed by a few that the duty on malting barley should be higher than is suggested in Mr. Chamberlain's proposals.

Suggestions as to
Barley

212

Oats is spoken of as a less expensive crop to produce than wheat, and though many witnesses declare that a duty of 2s. a quarter would be insufficient to benefit British oat growers materially, others again are of opinion that owing to the lessened cost of production even 1s. 6d. per quarter would be of benefit. A Berwickshire farmer thinks that a 1s. a quarter might be expected to lessen somewhat the import of "sulphured and shelly inferior oats from Northern Europe." It is suggested in the evidence that, seeing the competition now felt from the importation of Canadian oats, some duty, less than that upon foreign oats, should be put upon the Canadian product. A Bedfordshire farmer denies the assertion sometimes made that a duty on oats would be injurious to the British agricultural interest because farmers are now dependent upon imported supplies. On the contrary, he says,

Suggestions as to
Oats

213

they have infinitely more to sell than to buy. Other farmers, however, say that they buy more imported oats and barley for stock feeding than they sell of the home-grown cereals, and it is even stated that nine-tenths of the oats consumed by the owners of horses in the ten great towns of the kingdom are imported. The general impression would seem to be that the small duty proposed upon imported oats would yield some direct and indirect benefit to the home grower and make little or no difference in price to the consumer, inasmuch as home produce would be encouraged to take the place of foreign importations, the effect of the duty being to lessen the extent of this importation. Especially do Irish farmers welcome the idea of some duties. Several oat growers and salesmen think that imported maize should not be exempt from taxation, as it enters largely into competition with oats as a feeding stuff as well as with feed barley and rough wheat.

Suggestions as to Peas and Beans

214

Few definite proposals are made as to beans and peas in the evidence, though the general idea of moderate duties is often approved with the reservation that prices for feeding-stuffs should not be increased. "If," says a firm of London seedsmen, "a duty were put on all peas coming into this country, including peas for food, the British farmer would be greatly benefited, and would be able to considerably increase his acreage at remunerative prices, and without affecting the retail prices. In addition to this, it would find employment in the winter for a large number of women and girls in the country districts, sorting these peas." Maize is spoken of by some farmers as "knocking down the British bean trade" and they would welcome a duty on maize.

(2) GREEN CROPS.

Green Crops

215

The most detailed evidence with regard to potato growing given by farmers is from Lincolnshire, where they state that potato growing has on the whole increased of late years in the districts with which they are concerned. It is stated by some to be the best paying crop, though to a certain extent speculative and foreign competition is growing keener. An increase of potato growing is noted in various parts of the country, in counties, for instance, such as Bedfordshire, parts of Cambridgeshire, Nottinghamshire, Dorsetshire, Derby, Staffordshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. In other counties such as Norfolk, Suffolk and Durham, the experience of farmers points to a decrease, but on the whole a slight increase of potato growing appears to have taken place in the country during recent years. In Ireland low prices are stated to be the cause of decreased cultivation. The principal districts for the growing of turnips are stated to be in Lincolnshire and Norfolk. It is suggested that there is some special adaptability in the soil, but in these, as in other districts, the crop is said to be becoming less profitable and the area to have decreased. In Ireland a decrease in recent years is spoken of by witnesses, and several state that it is cheaper to buy than to grow turnips. Similar experience is recorded in the case of swedes. Mangolds, however, are being grown more extensively. With regard to vegetables there is complaint of bad prices, and though from several counties come reports of increased cultivation, there is evidence of the bad effect of transport disadvantages.

216

Causes of Change

The decline of corn growing and bad prices for corn are given as the chief reasons for the slight increase in potato growing. Lincolnshire farmers especially dwell upon these causes, but these and growers in other districts state that they suffer from foreign competition coming, according to their statements, from France and, in a lesser degree, Germany. More than 50 % of those giving evidence on potato culture dwell upon the disadvantages suffered in respect of railway rates in competition with France and other countries, and include witnesses from Bedfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Derby and Durham. It is urged that Lincolnshire and any county in the north of the Midlands is considerably handicapped in this way. Despite the great increase in traffic, the rate to London is said to be the same to-day as in the early eighties; while a Norfolk witness says that potatoes can be brought from Germany and Holland for less money than he pays to London. In the case of the majority, the complaint especially affects French competition. Witnesses from Ireland are chiefly concerned with the same alleged transport difficulty. An Antrim

farmer says it costs nearly as much to send to Belfast as from New York to Liverpool. Scotch farmers state that before the United States tariff became so high great quantities of potatoes were sent to that country. The statement of a Kildare farmer that recently there has not been a margin of profit between the price of store cattle and fat cattle, and that in consequence he has only half the acreage under root crops that he had 20 years ago, is typical of a number of answers from Ireland.

All potato growers who give an opinion in the course of their evidence on the question of remedies state generally that they are in favour of a duty on imported potatoes. Some go further and say that they do not consider 5 % sufficient, while others state definitely the duty that they would suggest. These suggestions range from 10s. to 20s. a ton. Irish witnesses, generally, are in favour of a duty. A Kent farmer says that the abrogation of the United States tariff would be a great boon, and in discussing remedies this is the point with which all the Scotch witnesses are principally concerned. The evidence on vegetables is generally favourable to the imposition of a duty on the imported article, and one witness says that we could send vegetables to France and the United States but for their tariffs and regulations.

Remedial
Suggestions

The statements made as to the cultivation of sugar beet do not strictly come under this heading, but it is convenient to summarise them here. Witnesses state that sugar beet is a profitable crop which can be produced in this country as well as in others, the yield per acre and the quality of the beet being equal or even superior. This crop would require a good deal of labour especially during winter in the factory. The chief difficulty under existing conditions would appear to be to attract sufficient capital for the erection of sugar factories in suitable localities, without which the farmer has no inducement to grow beets. Lord Denbigh, in a memorandum, indicates the changes in revenue policy which are deemed necessary for the creation of a sugar manufacturing industry in this country; and Mr. Sigmund Stein, of Liverpool, submits a memorandum showing the possible profit of sugar beet cultivation. (*See Memoranda.*)

Sugar Beet

(3) PASTURE.

The deterioration in the grade of British farming is repeatedly dwelt upon in the evidence. "The land generally," says a Bedfordshire farmer, "has fallen into the hands of a much lower class of men. Much of the hill land has gone down to poor grass. A certain class of men manage somehow or other to scratch a living off the land, but not as formerly by high farming and the use of plenty of capital." Hertfordshire and Berkshire farmers speak of sanfoin, lucerne and rye grass as being left "for longer terms owing to low price of corn and increased cost of labour." A Lincolnshire farmer says that in his experience, land has decreased in value about one half. In Suffolk, much of the land formerly under corn is spoken of as being now "too poor for pasture," and the grass is said by Huntingdon farmers to run to "a sort of weak herbage" that is of little or no value; in former days, on most of the land "wheat might be reasonably supposed to average 8 or 9 sacks an acre." The result of the tendency to let down to grass land which formerly grew corn is summed up as follows by the representative of the Berkshire and Oxfordshire Chamber of Agriculture:—"The effect upon the productiveness of land has been most disastrous;—the corn grower's stock decreased with his capital, the land deteriorated, often becoming unsuitable for pasture. The loss is enormous, and has had the effect of depopulating country villages." In parts of Buckinghamshire, the land "will not go down to grass at all. We only use rotation grasses." Much arable land is also reported to have been "let down to pasture," or laid down with lucerne to produce forage in Hampshire, Kent, the Home Counties generally, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Monmouthshire, and other counties. The representative of the Sussex Agricultural Society testifies that much of the Sussex land would under alternate wheat, corn, green crops and roots "produce much more meat per acre as well as corn than sown down to grass as now, half farmed and producing poor crops." One of the representatives of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture dates the great alteration back 25 years and says:—"Much of the poorer land has gone out of cultivation—gone down into very bad pasturage."

Pasture

221

The change for the worse began in 1880, and the profits on the whole have been steadily diminishing, especially in the last two years, which have been very disastrous in each branch of my farming." A Norfolk farmer speaks of the loss to labour from these changes; the cost of labour on arable land is 25s. an acre; on grass land 5s. He himself would like to spend £500 a year more on labour if the general conditions of agriculture could be ameliorated. In Wiltshire the heavy loams formerly under wheat every other year are mostly sown down to grass. "Wiltshire has a very large number of allotments and small holdings, there being by the latest returns 21,878 allotments under one acre, besides a very large number of small holdings varying from 5 to 50 acres. The majority of the pasture farms run from 50 to 200 acres. Nearly all these holdings are occupied by tenants who give special attention to the rearing and feeding of pigs, and this is particularly the case with the allotment tenants and small holders." A Worcester corn and seed merchant says they do not now pay local farmers for grain in one year what they used to pay in one week. No millers from the large towns now attend Worcester market. Worcestershire evidence shows that the decrease of arable land is continuing, and in many cases the land is very badly laid down, and has no chance of ever becoming good pasture. In Monmouthshire much of the land is "more suitable for corn than grass, as after a few years the clover dies out and runs to moss." As to Yorkshire, a North Riding witness says that "between Malton and Scarborough more land is going down to grass than 10 years ago; but on the wolds at Thirsk the conditions remain the same. Farmers are going in more for root crops and sheep."

222

Somewhat similar conditions are reported from many parts of Scotland. A Fife farmer says the land in Fife "is too good for sheep, though it is paying well under them along with cattle. I cannot work it any other way. I only went into sheep after the Canadian store trade was stopped. But those sheep should go back to the higher land to which they properly belong. This land, at 3% on the price I paid for it, would be rented at 28s. per acre, it will never be ploughed in my lifetime again unless we get our store cattle trade on another footing." A Forfar farmer speaks of the people "driven off some of the best arable land in Scotland; only the very best land will keep on grass."

223

In Ireland, also, farmers speak of the land formerly tilled which is now more or less out of cultivation, lying under pasture often badly sown, in poor condition and employing much less labour—an Antrim farmer says 75% less. A Galway farmer notes as a curious fact that in Ireland, where the land is good it is used for beasts, where it is bad there are human beings. A Kildare farmer gives his experience thus: "The day for profitable corn growing in heavy land is over, owing to foreign competition and scarcity of hands, and dearth of wages, &c., &c., and the thousand and one changes of a tillage farm. The only chance now is to work a tillage farm in conjunction with a grass farm, and expect the profit from the young cattle and sheep reared and fattened." A Kilkenny farmer estimates that "the country loses about £5 per annum on every acre of land out of cultivation for this reason: An acre of very poor land in grass is worth 10s.; under tillage its crop would be worth £5 10s. on really good land; if the grass of meadowing is reckoned at £3 or £4 an acre, the crop under tillage would be worth £8 or £9. In Kilkenny, thousands of acres eminently suited to wheat are now in pasturage of a poor quality. In many parts of Ireland, grazing has not been so profitable as formerly, and this is attributed largely, if not altogether, to foreign competition. 1902 was a remunerative season—we bought our cattle rather cheaper, got our young cattle in rather well, and it was also a very good year for crops and pasture and meadow, in fact, a good year all round. In the last 5 or 6 years we have had nothing like it."

224

Clover and Grasses

The competition of clover from France and Germany is spoken of by various Norfolk witnesses as a deterrent to their trade. A Great Missenden farmer says that "a mixture of clover and grasses for London paid fairly well on these hills when it would make £4 a ton on the farm in the

ricks. With the present prices of about £2 10s. a ton it does not pay." The low price of corn is named as the cause of increased cultivation of clover and other feeding stuffs for cattle and sheep in certain districts. An Antrim farmer speaks of grass seed as being "a much larger industry than formerly. The area, quality and yield have increased, the seed is purer, and more skill is applied in saving crops."

As already indicated, the chief cause named for these changes is low prices. The cost of cultivation is found to be too great at present prices of corn and produce generally. Allied to this cause, is the difficulty with labour and the desire to lessen the annual wages account. The evidence as to the conditions under which, in the opinion of witnesses, profitable cultivation could be secured has already been summarised under "Corn Crops," &c.

(4) HAY AND STRAW.

The evidence shows that wheat is now grown in many districts solely for the straw (see "Corn Crops"). "It is a temptation to a needy farmer," says one witness, "to sell the straw which should be used on the farm. The straw is sometimes more valuable than the corn itself. With the improved price of straw, wheat will just pay its expenses and very little more." Oat straw is spoken of in some cases as practically as valuable as wheat straw. Straw, itself, as manure is estimated by a Dorchester farmer to be worth about 10s. or 12s., and he says:—"A farmer would be wise to sell his straw at 40s. a ton and buy cake, but that may be carried too far and the land is considerably impoverished thereby." A different opinion is expressed by a Buckinghamshire farmer who says it is from straw that he gets his profit, and he adds:—"This does not penalise the next crop because I buy malt coombs, pig food, &c., to the extent of about £300 a year, besides what I consume off my own farm. The loss in straw is put back and set off against feeding stuffs and manure bought. The manurial value is so much below the price that the money is better spent in artificial manures or feeding stuffs, and no farmer would ever bind himself to use his straw on the place, unless so far from a railway that he could not possibly sell it."

The hay crop is said to be often unprofitable. "All through the first 30 years of my life," says an Oxfordshire farmer, "about every 4 years, the price of hay in England rose to about £5 a ton. Since the bad crop of 1893—when hay rose to £8 a ton in the autumn and fell to £4 before another crop was grown, in consequence of the foreign supply—we have never had the price of hay remunerative." Farmers, it is said, have been driven through the loss of capital to sell hay and straw. One witness said he had at the moment 1,000 tons of hay on his farms, accumulated during the last 2 or 3 years, which he cannot sell without a dead loss. "The foreigner sends hay to London at a cheaper rate than I can send it from Oxfordshire by rail. He sends so long as he can, and then the English farmers having held back supplies, the price falls too low for the foreigner and he leaves the market to us. But the moment there is a rise, in comes his supply again." A Northumberland farmer says that large quantities are imported via Newcastle and many large horse owners never use home-grown hay or straw. A Lancashire farmer says he "grows less second and third year's ley for hay, because such hay being of a second-rate quality has become very cheap in consequence of so much importation of foreign hay and the introduction of electric power." Farmers in Herts, Essex and Cambridgeshire "make it a rule to sell a portion of their hay and straw and buy linseed and cotton cakes and other feeding stuffs, and it is to their advantage to do so if they could but make a fair profit of their hay." Hay seed (threshed out of hay) is said, in the evidence of the Chairman of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Association, to be "very remunerative" in the North of Ireland, but prices are lower.

Reference is made in the evidence to an increase of hay imports. A firm of London hay and straw merchants say:—"25 years ago the import was practically nil. Now it runs to 6,000 or 7,000 tons per week. The splendid quality produced abroad and the ease in handling it, through being nicely

Cause of Change

Hay and Straw

Importations of
Hay and Straw

Experiences of Farmers.

229

baled, has quite overcome the prejudice against foreign goods, except in the most conservative quarters." Canadian hay is spoken of as controlling the price in Glasgow. A Kilmarnock farmer says it is sold all over Ayrshire and the West country. "It is good in quality and equal to our own, much of it goes to feed hunters, and it is not so dear as it was. The demand is about what it was, but the supply is larger. Hay has fallen £1 a ton in the last few years." A firm of Liverpool corn merchants say they "could have sold a lot of home-grown hay and chopped hay produced in the district if foreign hay from many countries had not come in so cheap." French hay and straw are also spoken of as competing imports. A Lanark farmer compares the 110s. per ton, which was the price of hay in 1876, with the 60s. obtained in 1904; straw in 1876 was worth 105s. per 35 cwt.; in 1904, 65s. 7d. In Ireland, on the other hand, according to a Longford farmer, straw which could be bought for 10d. to 1s. a cwt. is now worth 2s. 6d.

Railway Rates.

230

Complaint is made of the better transport rates on foreign hay. "A ton of hay can be brought from the middle of France to London for less money than we can send it from Peterborough to London." Other farmers say hay can be brought from Germany and Holland for less money than from Norfolk to London. An Oxfordshire farmer who pays about £600 or £700 every month to railway companies for the carriage of hay and straw, says he never pays "a month's account without a great number of trucks being charged as $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons, which really run considerably less, whereas the foreigner sends his at a minimum of 2 tons a truck, and he can put more on with ease, and yet the charge is precisely the same for the same distance." It is said that in 1892 "every railway company throughout England put up the rates for hay and straw considerably, but they brought them down in the end to 5 % above the old rates, and there they have stood ever since—90 % of them. They have only been reduced in a few cases where the railways have come into competition with roads and canals, as for instance, from Princes Risborough, in proximity to the London markets." The allegation of preferential rates is explained thus by one witness: "There is some preference given to foreign hay and straw. In England we do not steam or hydraulic press the hay and straw, but we machine press it; in countries which export to England the hay is called steam or hydraulic pressed, although much of it is really done by horse power; and in a railway rate book the words 'Hydraulic or steam pressed, Class C,' 'Machine pressed, Class C,' practically mean that the former is foreign and the latter English. It is obvious that hydraulic and steam-pressed hay and straw will go into a much smaller compass than machine pressed, but the railways quote the steam and hydraulic pressed to go at a minimum rate per truck of 2 tons, while the machine pressed, which is English, goes at a minimum rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons, and a great proportion cannot be loaded on the very small trucks provided by the railway companies so as to get $2\frac{1}{2}$ tons on a truck. We cannot steam or hydraulic press hay in little ricks at off-lying fields in England, and we require trusses suitable for our markets."

231

Remedial Suggestions

232

Most of the witnesses leave it an open question whether there should be a duty on imported hay and straw, more emphasis being laid upon a readjustment of railway rates. The statement is made that nine-tenths of the straw bought by the British Government for Army uses comes from the Continent.

(5) FLAX.

Flax

The home cultivation of flax has undergone a heavy decrease in recent years, and the linen trade is becoming more and more dependent upon flax imports, especially from Russia and Belgium. The evidence shows that flax was formerly grown in several parts of England and Scotland, but abandoned because of the increased cost of labour and foreign importations. Only 563 acres remained under flax in England and Scotland in 1904. At the time of the American Civil War, over 300,000 acres was under flax in Ireland; thirty years ago the area in the whole of the United Kingdom had fallen to 136,000 acres; this area fell again to 115,000 acres in 1881-5, and 83,000 in 1891-95; the

average for 1901-05 was 49,000 acres only. The home production is now almost entirely confined to the Irish province of Ulster, and one witness estimates that three-quarters of the flax consumed in the United Kingdom comes from abroad. Another estimates that 40,000 tons of flax are used annually by the flax-spinners of Ireland, of which 8,000 is Irish-grown.

In the Irish evidence there are many instances in which farmers in Antrim, Fermanagh, Down Londonderry and other counties have abandoned flax growth or lessened their flax areas owing to lower prices, difficulties in getting adequate labour, and the increase in working expenses generally. It is explained by a Belfast flax-spinner that "at present, flax is only grown by our smaller farmers whose families provide them with labour, and they do not till their ground carefully or produce good crops generally, but the larger farmers are prevented by labour difficulties from cultivating flax. Flax is as easy as other crops to grow, and large farmers should be glad to add flax to the crops they already cultivate, as it is remunerative when grown under proper conditions."

Reduced prices and increased cost of labour are given as the chief cause of the diminished production of flax. Emigration and the attractions of town life are held to be largely responsible for the labour difficulty. In Belgium and Russia, labour is both abundant and cheap. Belgium is also said to possess natural advantages which increase the Irish flax growers' difficulties in competition. It is explained that "Belgium produces the best flax, the climate, soil and treatment are favourable. Their flax is sold in the field and treated by experts. Retting is carried on in the River Lys, which is specially suitable, its temperature is higher than Irish rivers, which promotes advantageous fermentation. Flax comes from France, Holland, and all Belgium to be retted in the Lys. They grow better flax and take more care in scutching and dressing for the markets, consequently higher prices are obtained for the finished product." Many flax-growers and spinners speak of the greater skill in the Belgian flax treatment. The method of marketing the flax in Ireland is also criticised. A Donegal farmer says, "Strabane, my nearest town, was a very large market. Now it has diminished to almost unrecognisable proportions, for the simple reason that the flax is bought at the mills by the flax buyer instead of being taken to market. This is a disadvantage to the farmer, but it has become a system, and they stick to it."

The Flax Supply Association of Belfast have been carrying out interesting retting experiments at Millisle on behalf of the Irish Department of Agriculture. Details are given in the evidence of Mr. J. G. Crawford, and the results up to date are held to prove that flax can be thoroughly dried in the field in Ireland; that the seed can be saved and is of first quality; that the system of retting (Loppens and Deswarte's patent) is at least equal to the Lys in Belgium, as to quality and yield of fibre produced.

Improved Cultivation

Valuable figures are also given in the flax evidence, showing the profits on the flax crop of a County Down grower. The figures for the three years—1903, 1904 and 1905 are taken, and the following results are shown:—

		1903.	1904.	1905.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance net profit	.. .. .	78 4 2	50 10 6	130 6 10
Cost per acre	.. .. .	9 10 0	9 16 7	9 17 0
Profit per acre	.. .. .	9 4 0	6 6 4	11 17 0

The Irish witnesses also describe the efforts to bring about the combination of farmers to own scutching mills where the fibre is separated from the husk of the plant and to establish a depot in the Belfast market for the co-operative sale of this improved flax. One very important detail is the supply of the best seed, and arrangements are being made with a firm in Rotterdam to supply seed of the highest quality to flax-growers in the North of Ireland. The Secretary of the

237

Irish Agricultural Organisation Society explains also that it is hoped to develop the production of oil cake "as soon as we teach the people to save the flax seed." A Belfast flax-spinner says that "by crushing the seed for feeding purposes it is worth £3 per acre, less cost of manipulation, 30s. net additional profit. It is one of the best cattle foods. Seed for sowing is 50 % more valuable." The refuse of flax is sometimes used for paper-making, and here again some spinners think more use may be made of trading opportunities.

Extended
Cultivation

There is a widely-held belief that in Munster and Leinster as well as Ulster, the soil and climate are well suited to successful flax cultivation under improved conditions, though in few cases is any duty on flax proposed. It is also thought by some witnesses that flax cultivation might be resumed on a large scale in England and Scotland. A firm of Belfast spinners says, "We have bought small quantities of flax in England, but English cultivation has almost died out. They grow good straw, but they rot the flax in tanks heated by far too much steam, and the flax loses most of its strength. This could be overcome, and good enough flax could be grown in England. It used to be grown largely in Scotland, but has practically disappeared."

238

(6) TOBACCO.

Tobacco

Reference is made in the evidence to the small Irish experiments in tobacco culture undertaken in connection with the Irish Board of Agriculture with results which are regarded as not unsatisfactory. A high English agricultural authority states that "judged by Continental results tobacco should be much more successful in the warm, dry soils of the south-east of England than in Ireland." (*See Memoranda.*) The Excise regulations have, it seems, been very stringently applied to prevent extended experiments which certain farmers in the East Kent district desired to make some years ago. Meath evidence shows that the experiments in that county have covered 7 years. Professor Harper, of the University of Agriculture, Kentucky, who came over to superintend the curing, said the soil was perfect and the climate more suitable than Kentucky. The cost per acre for production, including interest on barn, is £18. The usual return in America is said to be 1,000 lbs. per acre, which at 4½d., the average price for American tobacco, amounts to £18 15s. The crop is said to require much moisture either in soil or atmosphere, and much labour, but is less precarious than any crop except grass. It is urged that tobacco should be given some relief of excise duty for a few years till the industry is established. The present position is stated thus:—"At present the foreigner is given a monopoly in tobacco since it is forbidden to grow in the United Kingdom. 1,000 lbs. is an average crop, and the duty at 3s. a lb. is £150. A temporary concession has been made of 1s. per lb. refund to the grower. I anticipate £50 15s. per acre net profit, including the refund. This would pay farmers to break up the necessary land, the best fattening land being the best for tobacco."

239

240

(7) HOPS.

Decrease in Hop
Acreage

The evidence on the hop industry covers the chief areas under hop cultivation, namely Kent, which is the chief hop-growing county, Sussex, and in a lesser degree Surrey and Hampshire in the south-east of England and Hereford and Worcester in the Midlands. Speaking generally, the hop industry is declared to be in a most unsatisfactory condition in recent years. The average hop acreage in England in the last two decades has been 57,462; in 1904 it was 47,799. The high-water mark in acreage was reached in 1878 when 71,789 acres were under cultivation, and from that time the decline has been steady and the acreage is represented as being now not much above what it was a century ago. The decline is in some small part attributed to the increased yield per acre. One witness says:—"We certainly grow one-third more hops per acre now than 25 or 30 years ago." The official figures for the whole country, as quoted in the evidence, show that the average yield

per acre rose from 7·7 cwts. in the decade 1885-1894 to 8·9 cwts. in 1895-1904. A witness indicated that if the 23,851 acres grubbed since 1871 were replanted, the yield at the average 8 cwts. per acre would be 190,808 cwts., and "we could produce practically the whole of the hops that are required for brewing purposes in England," the average importation for the 21 years, 1883-1903, having been 189,116 cwts.

There are districts in Kent where the acreage under hops is represented as being larger than it was 25 years ago. A Wye witness attributes the increase in his district to the abolition of an "extraordinary tithe" of 13s. per acre and of the 6s. per cwt. tax on hops grown by tenants on the Eastwell estate. A Selling witness speaks of some increase of area in his district, and speaks of certain years in which hop growing has been "prosperous." On the other hand the acreage in the Tonbridge district is said to have been reduced by quite one-third since 1886, and several Kent witnesses speak of considerable reductions in hop acreage in the Farnham, Tenterden, Sittingbourne and other districts. "There used to be a lot of hops on the hillsides adjoining Romney Marsh, but the great part has been grubbed within the last 20 years." A Sussex witness gives a list of 58 farms in the Wadhurst, Burwash, and Heathfield districts with an oasthouse capacity of 34,100 bushels on which all the hops have been grubbed. "When a farm changes hands (in most cases through the old tenant having lost nearly all his capital in the attempt to grow hops) it is taken by a man from quite another district, notably from Devonshire or Scotland, and these men at once grub the hops and use the farm for dairying or ordinary grazing." The oasthouses represent a large amount of capital, and are, in many cases, being used as granaries or warehouses, or are lying idle. Another Sussex witness points to the fact that whereas in 1887 there were 10,300 hop acres in the county, there are now only 4,700. A Herefordshire witness says many growers have had to abandon owing to the losses incurred and many only keep their gardens going in the hope that the reduction in acreage would bring an improvement in average prices. The representative of the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture also speaks of decreased acreage. On the other hand there are parts of Worcestershire where, witnesses state, they are putting in hops, not being able to grow corn.

State of the
Industry by
Districts

In dealing with the causes of change in the hop industry, the evidence indicates the possible temporary effect of better methods in decreasing the area under cultivation. After the abnormally high price of hops in 1882, the general adoption of hop washing and a higher standard of farming led to the growing of heavier and more regular crops. But when concurrently with this increase of production from a declining acreage there was a steady inflow of hops from the Continent and the United States, "surplus stocks accumulated causing ruinous prices, and a big reduction in the acreage followed." By most of the witnesses the decline in the acreage is attributed to this importation of foreign hops and the prohibitive foreign tariffs which check or almost entirely prohibit British exports. "The foreigner," says one witness, "has a free market here for surplus stock which he sends to be sold for what it will fetch whether it is wanted or not; whilst in years of abundance at home and scarcity abroad the English growers cannot compete in foreign markets owing to prohibitive duties." A higher standard of farming while more profitable was necessarily most costly, and beyond the reach of small holders. Thus we find one witness stating that "growers with new appliances for hop growing and drying have been able to grow larger crops at less expense than small growers and have increased their acreage, while the small growers are dying out fast." Among the minor causes mentioned as having led to grubbing are labour difficulties, "impecuniosity of growers," and losses occasioned through annual blights.

Causes of Change

Foreign
Importations

The number regularly employed in the hop industry is said to have diminished from the best recent year, 1878, by about 8,000 men, and the number of pickers employed for 2 or 3 weeks in the year by 129,000 men, women and children. As the average amount spent on labour is between

Effect upon
Labour

245

£20 and £30 per acre, this is represented as an annual loss of between £600,000 and £700,000 in wages alone, witnesses being for the most part agreed that we could easily grow all the hops required. A comparison of the expenditure on hops and pasture land is given as follows :—" 100 acres of hops will cost £5,000 to £8,000 to cultivate and produce ; and 100 acres of pasture land would want a very small outlay—£100 or £150. One man will look after the sheep on a 100 acres of grass, whereas it takes 40 men at least to look after the hops on 100 acres. £5,000 spent in the country against £150 must surely be a benefit to the nation at large."

Methods of Cultivation

246

Of late years there have been many improvements in hop-growing. Agricultural education is on a higher level, and is being more specialised, and a knowledge of the value of artificial manures has had its effect on the crops. Methods of cultivation have also been studied, and as the result of carefully conducted experiments at the South Eastern Agricultural College at Wye, improvements have been made in these methods and also in the training and curing of the hops. Pests, blight, mould, &c., which formerly troubled the hop-grower every two or three years, are now of annual recurrence ; but washing and sulphuring of hops has been carried on extensively to destroy the mould and latterly it was found that the use of these two remedies also enabled hops to be grown on land which was previously considered unsuitable. The cost of the spraying of hops is calculated by one witness at £1 per acre every time it is done ; and the improved method of cultivation now in vogue has, according to another witness, increased the cost of growing by £3 10s. an acre, and in other cases even more than this.

Prices and Profits

247

In hop growing, unlike most agricultural industries, the profits realised bear no relation whatever to the abundance of the crops. In 1890, when hops sold at £10 per cwt., the yield was very low ; and in 1886, 1894, 1899 and 1901 when the price fell to 40s. per cwt., the crops were large. It might be thought that this would average over a series of years, but there are other factors to be taken into consideration. In years of big crops the cost of picking is very heavy, and this, combined with the low price, diminishes the profit. In years of small crops when a higher price is necessary, the foreign hops prevent the market from rising. One witness puts it thus :—" In 1901 we had a very heavy crop, but it was one of the worst years on record, financially, owing to foreign competition. In 1902 there was a small crop, with unremunerative prices, owing to the heavy crop of the previous year. In 1903 there was another short crop, and the prices were again unremunerative, in this case owing to foreign competition. In 1904 we had the shortest crop since 1882, only the highly cultivated and thoroughly washed lands being remunerative."

248

The effect of foreign competition on short English crops is summed up by another witness :—" It sometimes happens that we have a short crop of hops here when a higher price is necessary to recoup the grower for his outlay. In the same year or in previous years, a large surplus may have been grown abroad. The surplus is sent here without contributing to our rates and taxes, and having to be realised is not infrequently offered at considerably below the cost of production in the country of origin, and the price of the home crop is thus disastrously regulated by the value of the foreign surplus and not by the cost of production. And since the case of a surplus crop being grown here we can get no outlet for it by reason of the prohibitive foreign tariffs, we stand twice hit, *i.e.*, by our own surplus in an abundant year, and by the foreign at all times."

Apart from the question of production there seems to have been a tendency, in late years, for prices to become lower. Taking the average of 10 years' periods from 1874, the prices realised per cwt. were—for the 10 years ending 1884, £8 15s. ; ending 1894, £6 ; and ending 1904, £5 4s.

Hop growing thus seems on the whole to be less remunerative than in former years. One witness says that taking the average crop and price for the 10 years ending 1903 and comparing them with the previous 10 years, " there has been a yearly loss of nearly £5 per acre on the English plantation." For the 5 years to 1898 another witness's farms yielded an average return of slightly

over 10 % on the tenant's capital employed. During the 5 years to 1904 there was an annual average loss of $3\frac{1}{2}$ % on the same farms. Another says, definitely, that "profits are 25 % to 30 % less than since 1884." On the other hand, several witnesses speak to slight increases of profits in recent years ; and to having done "fairly well." Taking the evidence as a whole and making allowances for the fluctuations in crops due to weather conditions (some districts having been more favoured with rainfall in the dry seasons than others), it would appear that prices are, to a large extent, controlled by the prices at which foreign hops are sold in the English market.

With very few exceptions, the witnesses declare themselves in favour of a duty on imported hops. "No crops," says one witness, "could bear a duty better than hops. In the years when hops were abnormally dear, the price of beer was not increased, nor would it be increased now if a duty were put on hops." A duty, it is argued, would prevent dumping, give stability to prices, induce larger growth and provide work for many more men, women and children. "The brewers could store in plentiful years and fall back on their stocks in short years." Some few suggest retaliatory duties, equal in amount to the duties imposed on our hops, or a small duty equivalent to our local taxation. Suggestions as to the amount of duty range from 5s. to 40s. per cwt. (or from 5 to 40 per cent. of the average price during the last ten years) the majority favouring the larger amount. Combined with the duty, one witness says there should be compulsory marking and dating, and a reduction of the beer duty by an equivalent amount. The unfair advantage which the foreign grower has would thus be overcome, and the surplus we get each year could not be dumped as hitherto. One witness is opposed to duties on the ground that duties would increase the acreage under cultivation and, consequently the production, and so lower the prices. "The attack of foreign hops upon our English growing," is spoken of by one witness as "insidious." He says :—"The brewer, by the manufacture of beer with foreign hops, slightly alters the taste of beer. There is a different flavour, and as the brewer uses more he must continue to do so. He cannot use all foreign hops one year and all English hops the next without considerably interfering with his trade." The argument based on this is that were a duty of 40s. per cwt. placed on foreign hops, the brewer would in the course of 4 or 5 years wean his customers from the flavour of foreign hops, and as the taste for the English flavour revived, so would foreign imports diminish and the home cultivation of hops increase. It is also pointed out that even the total prohibition of the imports of foreign hops would not make any material difference in the price of beer to the consumer. As no product of the soil employs so many persons and at such good wages as hops, labour would, it is urged, be induced to return to the land and the congestion in the labour markets of the towns be relieved.

Remedial
Suggestions

(8) FRUIT AND MARKET GARDENING.

The evidence indicates that Kent and Middlesex were formerly the chief British sources of fruit supply, but the chief sources are now Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, where suitable land for fruit cultivation is said to have increased enormously in value. The valley of the Clyde is named as "the biggest fruit land in the West of Scotland." Fruit is largely grown in some parts of the South of Ireland. There are many apple orchards, for instance, in Cork. Kilkenny was once famous for its fruits and orchards, but a Kilkenny witness says that the orchards are all dying out and fruit-growing has been discontinued. In parts of Ulster, strawberries and the small fruits are grown to a considerable extent, and a South Fermanagh grower declares that with great care, enterprise, and industry, the growing of the larger kinds of fruit, chiefly apples, will become profitable. In the North of Ireland, fruit-growing is largely in the hands of cultivators of 10 acres who devote themselves exclusively to fruit, and in other parts of Ireland it is said that the growth is largely in orchards attached to 30 and 40 acre farms.

A Kent market gardener finds trade in his district good and increasing, but he also finds profits "greatly diminished, especially in soft fruits." His produce goes to London, Manchester, Bradford,

Fruit

253

and other large northern towns. A Herefordshire fruit grower takes a more cheerful view. He says, "The fruit growing industry is flourishing, and likely to reach considerable dimensions; new plantations are being set out so as to use more horse, and less hand labour. Fruit crops vary greatly, but if land is laid out properly it should make ends meet by the 4th year." It is the experience of several growers that gooseberries pay better than currants, and as well as any small fruit, especially if they are got into the market early. Black currants would be remunerative, but for the ravages of the currant gall mite for 8 or 10 years. An Evesham apple grower finds clay land (avoiding low hollows where the frost drops) is particularly suited for apples, which colour better in Worcestershire than anywhere else. You cannot, he thinks, overdo the English market with good apples. "Until 5 years ago we did not cultivate them, but now our little men are finding them more profitable than any other fruit, and if the aspect is well chosen, the frost does not affect them like plums. Formerly we planted apples in grass orchards, but for the last 8 to 10 years the ground has been cultivated with forks, and kept clean. The trees are put down 20 to 25 feet apart, with garden crops and strawberries between." Apples are similarly cultivated in Cambridgeshire, but not of such good quality or colouring, because of the different subsoil. It is stated in the Evesham evidence that "tinned fruit business is growing here through the duty on plums, which formerly came in free (chiefly from California) and sold at very low prices. The tax of 75 per cent. was imposed by the Customs when the sugar duty was framed, and plum pulp now enters as "prunes." The duty, amounting to 1s. 9d. per dozen tins, is said to have enabled English jam makers to tin fruits extensively in syrup, and checked importations of plum pulp from Bosnia, Holland, &c. One English firm alone did 1,000,000 tins last year. "Californian now cost 7s. 9d. a dozen tins, and ours can be put on the market for 5s. 6d., which helps the Englishman to dispose of much fruit for home and export." The enlargement of the home demand for fruit is illustrated by a Worcestershire witness. He says, that nearly all large towns contain fruit markets, in which the business has marvellously increased. Manchester market, 50 years ago a small affair in the street, is now a fine covered-in market of 5 to 6 acres. In Leeds, only three fruit merchants existed in 1854, there are now 20 large and many small dealers, and a market which has been greatly enlarged. The same applies to Birmingham and the large northern towns. The Glasgow market has expanded considerably during recent years owing to the great increase of both home-grown and foreign fruit; the large supply at moderate prices has created a very much increased demand.

254

Effect of the Sugar Duty

Increased Home Demand

255

Increase in Market Gardening

The successful development of market gardening in the Evesham district is described in the evidence. The acreage under fruit and vegetable cultivation has much increased since 1879 on lands formerly under corn. The methods of California and Canada have been copied, cultivation is greatly improved and made more scientific and uniform than formerly. "Very heavy clay land, not worth 5s. an acre for wheat growing, is adapted for fruit and vegetables, especially asparagus, hundreds of acres of which have been put down." In 1870 small holders held 2,000 acres within eight miles of Evesham; now 2,400 cultivate 15,000, averaging 1 to 10 acres each, and these holdings increase every year. It is explained that very few holders own the land, some own the houses. "They practically all started as working men who rent the land, plant it with fruit trees, and retain the tenant right, spending considerable capital in doing so. Land practically derelict 20 years ago was taken by working men at £1 per acre in two or three acre lots for growing asparagus. Many now hold 6 acres, they own their houses, and some of them have sufficient means to support them for life." Market gardening has also become an important branch of agriculture in parts of Bedfordshire, the Fen country, Lincolnshire, parts of Yorkshire and Norfolk and other districts, though a Boston farmer says market gardening is "nothing like so profitable as it was—there is too much local competition," which is in itself in large measure due to the invasion of British markets with foreign produce.

256

"During the last 30 years," says a Lincolnshire salesman, "hundreds of acres which used to feed bullocks have been ploughed up and applied to market gardening purposes, so that to-day South

Lincolnshire, owing to its exceptional fertility of soil, is in a fairly prosperous condition. Signs are not wanting, however, that this prosperity may be shortlived. Potato growing, market gardening and small seed growing, such as mustard and turnip, have been our salvation, but year by year the competition of the foreigner in these very products becomes greater." A London salesman speaks of the "tremendous industry employing thousands of hands" in the cultivation of agricultural produce under glass. According to a Hertfordshire grower, business has not increased during the past 4 or 5 years, it is almost stationary now owing to low prices, which are said in some cases to have fallen 40 % in 10 years, leaving very little profit.

The unprofitableness of corn culture is named as one of the causes of increased market gardening, but the impression is conveyed that profitable culture is now being jeopardised by foreign importations and increased local competition, and also by comparatively heavy local and railway rates. **Causes of Change**

A London salesman indicates the injury being done by foreign fruit and vegetables to the trade in produce grown under glass. The competition of produce from France and the Mediterranean is specially referred to as a cause of the heavy fall in the value of crops in Lanarkshire and the district adjacent to Glasgow. "Last season when fruit was plentiful, plums were largely imported from Belgium, reducing the price 20 %. Much Belgian fruit is grown on trees planted by the Government, beside canals, roads and railways, and sent here to be sold for what it will fetch." A London salesman notes that "all kinds of French fruit and produce come into direct competition with ours, and the home growers have to avoid altogether the season when these French goods arrive. Lower rates to encourage export are given by French railways." The instance is quoted of a French firm who a few years ago "took over a bankrupt business in one of our northern ports where they can get cheap freight. They established a London business, and now pay 6 % dividend. Their system of organisation with the advantage of climate will cut us out from our own northern markets unless some small tax is imposed on their goods so as to give the English grower his opportunity." The "dumping of foreign goods is," says a Nottinghamshire horticulturist, "an increasing evil. Formerly it was confined to bulbs and flowers, but is more rapidly spreading to roses, fruit trees, ornamental trees and shrubs. Large quantities of these are now sold by auction, often at prices below the cost of production." The Lincolnshire evidence also refers particularly to the importation of washed celery. A Covent Garden grower and salesman who has been in the market garden trade since 1850, found he was losing money through foreign competition, and did not renew his leases of market garden land. **Competing Imports**

American competition is especially singled out as a hindrance by English apple growers. The representative of the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture says:—"We used to be able to store the harder kinds of apples and bring them out from November till March. That is all done away with owing to importations of American apples. They send them larger and better-looking than ours, and our old orchards have become practically useless." Another Worcester grower contends, however, that, despite these imports, improved methods of distribution would find a market for well-graded selected British apples. The Tasmanian imports do not compete, as they arrive when the English apple is practically off the market. American cider is said to enter into keen competition with English-made cider, and has, according to a Hertfordshire cider-presser, "cut profits down to a loss." At the same time, owing to the lack of suitable English apples, the English cider maker is often dependent upon imported apples, mostly Canadian, though "a cider from a sour home-grown fruit will produce a better article" than cider from imported apples. A Norfolk firm say that cider made from imported apples costs them from 25 to 35 % more than that offered by an American firm.

The increase in local rates and railway rates and the lack of railway facilities are also spoken of as deterrents to increased cultivation. According to a Worcester witness, the Midland Railway requires that fruit is to be collected and delivered in 2-ton lots. "The difficulty is for one grower **Railway Rates**

261

to gather fruit from his neighbours and make up a 2-ton lot. One man does not like to expose his market to his neighbour. It is just possible that an improvement in this respect could be made by developing the system of co-operation. It has not been tried at all in our district." It is also a ground of complaint that English railway companies classify different kinds of fruit under different headings, and charge more for some than others; on the Continent there is no such classification, and it all comes forward at a considerably less rate than that charged in England. A Chesterfield merchant thinks it unjustifiable that the railway companies should charge different rates upon different kinds of fruit. "Take a small grower who is sending 10 or 15 cwts. of hard and soft fruit—that is, apples and plums. They will make them up into small lots by dividing the consignment into 2, 3 or 4 different classes. We find that the minimum rate as between apples, pears, plums and currants differs, and the answer of the railway companies is that they have greater risks with one variety of fruit than with another. There are really, however, no greater risks as the consignment is carried in one wagon and at owner's risk." Again: "A railway company takes the same carriage for a ton of plums, when the plums realise £15 or £20, as it does if they realise 50s. If the railway companies would take into consideration the appointment of a committee each season to fix the rates on a sliding scale according to the crop, that would help the fruit grower more than anything." A Winchcombe fruit grower complains that the railway companies have ceased to pay reasonable claim for loss of market. "They charge us a high rate for a perishable article and now entertain no claim for late delivery at owner's risk rates, nor at company's risk rates if the fruit is delivered any time the day after despatch. Fruit growers, therefore, cannot send perishable soft fruit by goods train with any security of delivery. It is doubtful if we have any legal claim against the railway even on fruit sent at company's risk. We use the owner's risk rate because it is lower, but even that is high for a perishable article; compare the respective rates for fruit and minerals." "It is," says a Sittingbourne grower, "no uncommon thing to see our trucks of fruit shunted for the foreigner to pass and so be in the market first." Witnesses in the West of Scotland say that the Caledonian Railway "has a monopoly, and the rates are more excessive than those for Leith, which were fixed when the railways had to encounter canal competition. Producers send 10 tons or more at a time, but have still to face a differential rate for foreigners." A Lanarkshire fruit dealer says that from the nearest fruit district to Glasgow—16 to 29 miles—"we pay 11s. to 16s. a ton. Foreign fruit, via Leith, comes at a through rate: 50 miles in 2-ton lots at 6s. 8d., and without a through rate, 8s. 9d., including cartage. It costs us 1s. 1d. to bring a barrel of apples from the western portion of New York State to New York, over 430 miles, and from London it costs 3s. 6d. to Glasgow, and 1s. 9d. to Liverpool." "Our railways," says a London fruit salesman, "do not give sufficient attention to the quick delivery necessary owing to the perishable nature of the fruit." Continental States owning the railways offer very great advantages to the growers. In Hamburg, Berlin, &c., fruit is always carried by passenger train at goods rates, and "grande vitesse" at "petite vitesse" rates. On the other hand, salesmen concerned in the Hampshire fruit trade say they have very good arrangements with the railway company.

262

263

264

Local Rating

The heavy increase in local rating is also dwelt upon in the evidence; the assessment of glass-houses as buildings is regarded as unfair. A Yorkshire witness says: "A man holding a number of glass-houses and 20 acres of market gardens, who has been at the business 70 years, is paying 60 % more rates than 15 years ago. Other large market gardeners and fruit growers pay 75 % more than they did." It is admitted that the Agricultural Rates Act has helped the tenant in fruit growing districts. A Fermanagh farmer complains of the increased rating when land is planted with fruit as a "tax on the grower's industry and enterprise."

Labour

The labour difficulty is felt in some districts, for market garden crops are said to require more than five times the amount of labour necessary in ordinary farming. The need is met in part by large numbers of Irish labourers "coming year by year from Ireland to work on the same farms, and the same faces may be seen at work as 10 or 20 years ago."

The general impression conveyed by the evidence is that market gardening and fruit culture would increase were growers assured of fairly remunerative prices. "At present, home markets may always be flooded by foreign importations of produce, which ought to and can be produced here, where many acres of land out of cultivation are well adapted for fruit and vegetables; the labourer would reap the advantage, and we should not hear so much the cry of 'back to the land,' as labourers would remain on the land, and small holdings would extend, keeping not only the labourers of to-day on the land, but the rising generation. Much land out of cultivation could grow fruit." It is recognised that imported produce often arrives here at a time when home produce is not on the market, and is also often needed to supplement a short British crop. There should be no delay in delivery, consequent upon a Customs duty, in so perishable a commodity; but the opinion is widely held that imported fruits and vegetables "should bear at least the same tax as home-grown," in order to equalise as far as possible the tax burden of each, and in order that the foreign grower should not be left, entirely untaxed, to secure control of British markets as he often does. The evidence indicates a beneficial effect upon British cultivation arising from the duty which the arrangement of the sugar tax now throws upon imported plum pulp, and it is suggested that this tax, amounting in the case of Californian tinned plums to 7s. per cwt. or 1s. 9d. per dozen tins, should be extended to all imported fruit pulps. Imported fruit pulp, bottled fruits and vegetables, fruit juices, &c., are regarded as manufactured articles and should be taxed. "If we grew half these importations, the labour in cultivating, gathering, pulping, canning and bottling expended in this country would benefit labourers and growers enormously." A fruit salesman indicates that "it is solely foreign fruit that is condemned*; to avoid condemnation it is often sent as pulp." The enormously increased importation of fruit, flowers and vegetables grown under glass should also, it is generally urged, bear some taxation in the interests of increased British production, though witnesses hesitate to suggest any exact scale of duties which is felt to be a matter for detailed investigation.

It is realised that almost any change in the British fiscal system would assist British producers to find markets abroad for certain classes of produce. "We can," says a London fruit salesman, "sell in Germany tons of hot-house produce weekly as against pounds in France. The Minister of Finance would not have dared to put a tax of 5s. per kilo on grapes if we could have retaliated as the whole 'petite culture' of France looks to England as the best market." "When we attempted to make business in Paris," says an English merchant, "there were grapes grown under glass coming into Paris from Belgium. Those were taxed, with the result that they were driven here and have damaged our growers by thousands a year."

Some amendment of the Market Gardeners' Compensation Act is suggested. This Act is spoken of by an Evesham grower as a failure with small holdings; "a landowner will not let under this Act, but signs a yearly agreement with a clause that if he gives notice to quit he shall pay the same compensation as under the Act. A man taking bare land at £2 per acre, in 4 or 5 years time his tenant right is £50 per acre, and he considers himself perfectly safe under this agreement. There are always men ready to go in and pay to out-going tenants the tenant right, which should never be in the landlord's hands." It is also indicated by a Derbyshire witness that "The system of land tenure and compensation for laying out land in fruit has not been satisfactory. It does not encourage the farmers to plant fruit trees that could be grown in our district, such as damsons."

Instances are quoted of the need of more intelligent cultivation and packing. A great many of our home growers "do not grow the fruit; they let it grow; other countries look after it and cultivate

* On this subject of the importation of damaged foreign fruit a Covent Garden salesman submits to the Commission the copy of a circular addressed on October 22nd, 1906, by the Fruit Trade Association, Ltd. (Frucht-handel-Gesellschaft) of Bremen, to Spanish shippers complaining of the unsound condition of shipments of Almeria grapes to Germany. The circular concludes as follows:—"In order to re-establish this good reputation and avoid further disasters we can only recommend the packers to abstain from shipping any fruit which is not in good condition and fit to stand the voyage. Rotten fruit sells much worse on the Continent than in England, as duty has to be paid on the good as well as the bad, and naturally our clients take this into consideration and will not pay high prices for damaged grapes."

269

it." A Scotch fruit dealer declares that "in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire they generally grow inferior apples for cider, but are now cultivating good varieties for the market and handling them in the best way. It is as easy to grow good apples as bad." An Evesham grower declares that barely 10 % of the fruit grown in English grass orchards is fit for market; 90 % is only fit for cider and jam. The experience of a Ross firm of growers is quoted as evidence of the high prices obtainable from apples well grown and packed, so as to compete with the best imported apples. Further aid in fruit distribution would, it is urged, be very useful. "Many large towns with suburbs find difficulty in getting fruit even in a plentiful season. In South Devon towns, at the end of big fruit seasons, they have difficulty in getting plums when we are practically giving them away. That is the fault of distribution." A "cash on delivery" system is also advocated.

Benefit to Labour

270

Much is said of the benefit to labour arising from improved conditions of fruit culture and market gardening. A Ledbury witness puts the culture and market gardening cost of fruit farm labour at £11 15s. per acre as against 25s. only for ordinary farm labour. A Winchcombe witness gives the following estimate:—"Labour on fruit farm costs £8 10s. per acre. Rent, rates, taxes, labour, manuring and interest on capital amount to £20 to £25. This is exclusive of fruit picking and carriage, which vary with the crop. The spraying machinery with 500 yards of iron main cost £1,000. We have several horse and hand machines. To plant tree fruit, with bush fruit below, costs £30 to £35 per acre."

Preference

The question of Colonial preference on fruit is also referred to in the evidence, and it is indicated that a preference upon Colonial over foreign fruit could be made a substantial item in any bargain with the Colonies, the cold storage method having greatly increased the possibilities of Colonial supply.

(9) ANIMALS AND MEAT.

Animals and Meats

271

The evidence illustrates (1) the continuous increase in the number of cattle in each country in the United Kingdom in recent years; (2) the lesser increase in sheep in Wales and Scotland, and the decline in England and Ireland; (3) the practically stationary character of the number of pigs; and (4) the failure of home-fed meats to keep pace with the growth of the home population as regards beef and veal, mutton and lamb, and pork, bacon and ham. A few typical instances may be quoted from the evidence.

Cattle and Milk

272

The delegate of the East Suffolk Chamber of Agriculture states that the depression in agriculture, which began 25 years ago, applies to all branches more or less, with the exception of milk producing:—"We are protected in that it is the only thing that the foreigner cannot at present send us in any quantity; the condensed trade does not affect us very much." An increase in milk production is generally spoken of by farmers living near large towns. It is often the only branch of their farming which is regarded as remunerative. To this fact is attributed the greatly increased home competition in milk production, so much so that farmers living at any distance from a railway find even milk production unprofitable. A Northamptonshire farmer who has sent milk to London regularly for many years speaks of a fall in the price of milk owing to the increased home competition; and adds:—"Sterilisation enables milk to be kept much better, and large quantities of desiccated milk come over from the Argentine in cake and powder, and the export is increasing; it is very palatable, and tastes like cooked or sterilised milk." A land agent and valuer whose business covers a large area in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, finds that the profits on the production of meat of all kinds have diminished in recent years except in particular localities. The president of the Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs and Chambers of Agriculture says that cattle do not do as well as formerly, "profits have almost disappeared, we have just been able to live." A Lincolnshire land agent and valuer says: "No man can produce beef at 7s. 6d. a stone, the ruling price for the past five years." It is the experience of a Buckingham farmer that "of the last 7 or 8 years, 4 have been very bad for grass land farmers, though latterly there has been improvement in the milk trade." An Oxfordshire farmer speaks of the loss which all graziers incurred owing to the heavy autumn supplies of foreign beef, the loss in some cases being stated at 50s. per head of cattle. Another Oxfordshire farmer

says, "milking instead of sheep farming will soon tell its own tale. Pastures are nothing like so good as formerly, and the system of laying down is all wrong." The representative of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture whose farm has received the Royal Agricultural Society's prize for cultivation and management, and who has a large practice as agricultural valuer in five counties, also speaks of diminished profits. The representative of the Somerset Chamber of Agriculture gives it as his experience that the breeding of stock and the management of a good dairy are better than the fattening of cattle. "My experience of agriculture," he adds, "is that there is plenty of hard work and very little profit in it."

The Welsh evidence shows that farmers in South Wales go in largely for the breeding of store cattle and sheep, and the production of butter, and that profits have decreased in every branch. A Monmouthshire farmer indicates, however, that Monmouth has suffered in bad times less than many other counties, owing to the close proximity of a populous market for all kinds of produce. In Gloucestershire the most remunerative branch of farming is said to be stock rearing, while corn growing is the least remunerative; "things are now settling down to the altered conditions, and farmers are just making a fair living."

Some of the Scotch witnesses, especially feeders of stock, meat salesmen and butchers, indicate losses brought about by the exclusion of Canadian store cattle for fattening upon Scottish pastures. In the absence of such stores, cattle feeding has, according to this Scotch evidence, been ruinous, while sheep have paid well. A feeder in East Scotland says that when the supply of Canadian store cattle was cut off 12 years ago, cattle profits fell £3 a head. The Scotch evidence also lays stress upon the decreased price for milk in recent years, though dairy cows are said to be the only stock which have not fallen in value, prices being now the same as in 1875. In the Scottish milk trade there is competition in the shape of separated milk from Ireland entering Glasgow "to the extent of 6,000 gallons per day." It is insisted that this milk should be sold for "what it really is."

The chairman of the council of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Association indicates the general conditions in Ulster, where he says "Dairy farming near large towns or tillage farms is fairly satisfactory, considering the price of milk." In Ireland generally, however, the evidence indicates that both grazing and cattle are less remunerative now than formerly, store cattle being dearer to buy, and beef cheaper, owing to the large importations of meat. In the opinion of many witnesses, the raising of stores pays better than the fattening of cattle. A Longford farmer indicates that stores have been selling at 35s. per cwt. live weight, while best beef was making only 30s.

The evidence in regard to sheep indicates increases in some counties and decreases in others. Those breeding special classes of sheep would seem to be doing fairly well. "Sheep have paid better the last few years," says a Huntingdonshire farmer, "but where good flocks of ewes were once kept, no sheep are now owned." The evidence from Cambridgeshire, Dorsetshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and other counties is to much the same effect. A witness who has had large experience as an agricultural valuer, says that Hampshire, which was formerly a regular sheep country, has now much fewer sheep than formerly. According to the representative of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Chamber of Agriculture, sheep breeding and feeding have for the last three or four years been the most profitable branches of farming in that part of England, largely on account of the increased price of wool in recent times and the lessened importation of mutton, both due to the great drought in the Australian Colonies. The representative of the Winfrith Farmers' Club, Dorsetshire, indicates that the number of sheep is greatly decreasing in Dorsetshire. He says:—"In my case I spend £500 a year on artificial food, and by that means I have not lowered my stock; but where you do not supply artificial food to a large extent your stock is reduced. On land that is put down to grass, you can keep fewer head of stock." A Norfolk farmer finds that sheep breeding

Sheep

277

pays best, and speaks of it as the "mainstay of light land or of Norfolk farming," imported frozen and chilled mutton not being looked upon with favour in comparison with "all-English-grazed best mutton." The representative of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture indicates that sheep breeding and cheese-making have been fairly good, though "agriculture generally is as black as it can be." The representative of the Suffolk Agricultural Association speaks of the success of the black-faced Suffolk sheep, and finds sheep "the most profitable part of our farming." Somewhat similar evidence relates to other special breeds of sheep which "are bought for exportation all over the world, principally to South America."

Pigs

278

As to pigs, the delegate of the Somersetshire Chamber of Agriculture says much money has been lost in pigs in recent years owing to the large importations of bacon; Cambridgeshire evidence indicates that pigs did very well for two or three recent years, but now do "very badly." From Lincolnshire, Suffolk and other counties the reports are not favourable. The Irish evidence in regard to pigs undoubtedly indicates a decrease in pig feeding, but the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society and other witnesses entirely dispute the contention that this decrease is due to the development of creamery dairying. They point to the fact that in Canada and Denmark, where the creamery system is in great vogue, the production of pigs is increasing. They also indicate that in the matter of pig breeding Ireland is not competing on equal terms with the foreigner, and point to the better methods practised in Denmark and other foreign countries. There is not much in the evidence in regard to horses. A Cambridgeshire farmer speaks of rearing horses as very uncertain; "you get so many blemished ones amongst them." The representative of the Derbyshire Agricultural and Horticultural Society says:—"Shire horse breeding is not so good as it was. Unless we breed the very best class of Shire horse we find it very difficult to get a remunerative price. There is not the same demand for the same class of animals."

Horses

Pedigree Stock

279

The evidence shows that, especially in certain districts, and with special classes of stock, considerable advantage has been derived from the breeding of pedigree stock, and this is one of the few branches of agriculture in which there is a substantial export trade, the increase in the value of total exports of animals being from £313,000 in 1875 to £1,249,000 in 1905. The export of horses is chiefly to the Continent, and of cattle and sheep to the Argentine and South America generally, and to Canada and the United States.

Causes of Change

280

The increase in the number of cattle in the United Kingdom is not commensurate with the increase of the population. The fact that the proportionate increase of milch cows has been greater than that of other cattle would seem from the evidence to be due to the development of milk farming in the place of dairying. The absence of foreign competition in milk is pointed to as one cause of this change; other causes named include the increased railway facilities for milk carriage, the lessened labour bill, and the smaller capital requirement. The increased price of wool, and the Australian drought are mentioned as reasons why some farmers have kept more sheep than formerly. The cause operating most widely in recent years to produce changes in the live stock industry of the United Kingdom is, however, the enormous increase of imported animals and meat from America and the Argentine in recent years, especially under the improved refrigeration and similar means for long-distance transport. A Liverpool broker contends that large quantities of cattle, sheep and beef are sold here by Americans "at much less than current prices in America, and 30 per cent. less than the price at which such meats can be produced in this country." A Buckinghamshire farmer declares that between the price of beef now and 20 years ago there is a shilling a stone difference—that is £5 on a bullock. The representative of the Derbyshire Agricultural and Horticultural Society says that where the best beef was worth 8d. a few years ago, it will now fetch no more than 6d. a pound, while the prices of the lower grades of meat have been even more heavily affected. The same class of beef as is imported and sold at from 3d. to 4d. per lb. cannot, it is said, be produced in this country under 6d. wholesale. A Hertfordshire farmer notes that he has frequently sent stock to his best market seven miles away, "and found

the price from the previous week so seriously decreased owing to there being large shipments of foreign cattle to offer, that I have brought my stock home again." The experience of a Lincolnshire land agent and valuer in regard to prices, is as follows:—"As to stock raising, no man can produce beef at 7s. 6d. a stone, the ruling price for the last five years. Sheep at the present time are rather good, but beasts are anything but good. Pigs are very bad indeed. They have never been lower. The price of pork is very low, 5s. a stone at the present time. Mutton is very dear, but the wool is making the difference." The evidence from Scotland indicates that while there has been very little diminution in the number of cattle reared, the margin of profit has practically become an inexpressible quantity. This is directly resultant from the enormous competition of imported live and dead meat, the prices for which at such distributing centres as London, Birkenhead, Glasgow and Bristol really dominate the rates obtainable elsewhere.

The Irish evidence lays much stress upon the heavy drop in prices. A Donegal farmer remembers getting from £18 to £20 for cattle of the class which now sells at from £12 to £14. A Kildare farmer says:—"Farmers who used to fatten cattle on grass or turnips were very hard hit in the spring when Argentine beef came in and stall-fed oxen had to be sold in Dublin market—fat for 28s. per cwt. (live weight), which means little more than store price, leaving the entire cost of oil cake and turnip a dead loss." "Beef," says another Kildare farmer, "has fallen from 80s. per cwt. to 50s.," and this witness especially complains that foreigners, "who pay often no rent for their land, and certainly no taxes to our exchequer," should be enabled to compete thus ruinously with Irish farmers "who are forced to pay rent, besides county rates, poor rates and income tax, amounting to very nearly the entire cost of production." "Before the Americans sent cattle into this country," says a Limerick farmer, "I remember our getting £30 each for fat bullocks which would not now fetch £20 at the most, and those were bought at £4 as calves." "In former years," notes a Londonderry farmer, "all farm produce was beef and mutton, giving a splendid return, but of late I found it impossible to compete against foreign imports; in consequence I have given it up, and keep only store cattle for English and Scotch markets." It is, in fact, suggested that Ireland is fast changing from an agricultural to a grazing country, largely owing to foreign importations and consequent low prices, and that the products of the land will soon be little else than young cattle, butter and eggs.

Many instances are given of the impediment caused to British agriculture by what farmers regard as excessive railway rates. The president of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture alleges that foreign cattle can be brought via Newcastle to London for much less than English cattle from Newcastle, and very much less than from Leicester. "In Leicestershire our cattle comes from Ireland, Wales, Herefordshire, at a cost of 21s. to 23s. This excessive rate tells very much against us." And there are several other such cases. The Irish evidence especially emphasises this point, for instance, a Roscommon farmer says, "it costs £2 8s. 4d. to send 8 or 9 beasts to my nearest market—Dublin, and £1 a head to see them in any of the North-eastern markets of England. There is no 'market ticket' for the stock owner, and the Midland and Great Western Railway will not furnish a 'special' unless one is a good customer, and will not find a 'stock special' unless of 10 wagons, costing nearly £50. It is not every farmer who wants to send 80 or 90 head of cattle to market." "Cattle to London," says a Kerry farmer, "costs the same from Killarney as from America." The ever-increasing burden of local rates is also spoken of in the evidence. A Leicestershire farmer declares that every fat beast he raises from calfhood to maturity costs him in rates and charges on the land 10 per cent. of what he eventually makes. There is an almost universal agreement that the farmer greatly benefited from the reduction of rates under the Agricultural Rates Act.

The importance of some toll upon imported meat supplies is generally recognised in the evidence, and though there are farmers among the 2,251 answering the forms and giving oral evidence who dislike all duties, and some again who would favour a higher duty, there is an overwhelming support for the belief that the proposed 5 per cent. duty would generally benefit British agriculture, especially if means were found to devote the proceeds to some form of relief of rates or other

Railway Rates

Local Rates

Remedial
Suggestions

5 % Duty

285

agricultural burdens. This benefit is anticipated by farmers of every grade in every part of the United Kingdom. The contention that seems to appeal most widely to the average farmer is put thus by a Penrith farmer:—"My farm feeds 80 cattle and 500 sheep per annum, this is all that is sold off the farm, any small sales such as wool being balanced by cake purchased. It pays in Imperial and local taxation £43 per annum, which is equal to a tax of about 5s. per head on the cattle and 1s. on the sheep; the town of Penrith charges a toll for English cattle entering a sale. The above is about the quantity of sheep and cattle killed by some of the Penrith butchers, and the butcher selling home stock has to compete against a shop where foreign is sold, which has paid nothing to local or Imperial taxation nor to town's tolls."

Admission of
Store Cattle

286

The Scottish evidence lays greater emphasis upon the importation of Canadian store cattle as a remedy for depression among Scottish graziers, and support is also given to this proposal by some Norfolk and a few other English graziers, and there are frequent references in the English evidence to the scarcity of good stores. On the other hand, there is strong and general evidence against the proposal from breeders and general farmers who dread the introduction of disease. In Ireland especially, the proposal to admit Canadian stores is strenuously resisted as certain to prove most damaging to the Irish store cattle trade with Great Britain.

Live and Dead
Meat

287

The proposal for the higher taxation of dead than live meat is supported by the following arguments:—"Disease is more easily detected in the live beast than in the carcase. "Proper inspection can only be made at the time an animal is slaughtered, with its entrails present." By the present arrangement we "virtually give the foreigner a good bounty to send us all his inferior stuff, and has the effect of reducing the prices of both the foreign live cattle and our own stock, which are all carefully inspected." Much importance is attached to the general sanitary argument in favour of the importation of live rather than dead meat, especially in view of the difficulties of effective inspection upon importation.* A good deal is also said as to the value to British industry of the labour involved in the slaughter of imported animals and in the use of the hides, horns, etc., in the tanning and other industries, giving still further employment; while in the offals also much food would be brought to this country of a cheap character for the poorer classes. A Smithfield official gives the following reasons for a higher duty on dead meat:—" (1st) The value of a carcase of foreign dressed meat is only about 75% of the value of the animal imported alive; (2nd) much capital is invested in the waterside slaughtering business, and almost entirely English capital; (3rd) the importation of live cattle brings into existence several minor industries, as tanning, soap boiling, &c., whereas dead meat makes no work; (4th) an undue preference is already given to foreign dead meat by railway companies, who carry Yankee beef at 25s. per ton from Liverpool into this market (the carriage of English meat from Birmingham, half the distance, is 40s. per ton), and run express trains to meet the boats which carry the Dutch meat, and in other ways put foreign productions at a premium." The advantage to British labour from the slaughtering and handling of 1,000,000 cattle is put at £375,000. Another estimate is that "the hides and offals would be worth, say, £3 sterling a head—£3,300,000—and there is no raw material that would give more employment or circulate more money. The wages paid for slaughtering alone, at 3s. to 5s. a head, say at 3s., would come to £165,000. Value of offal and labour in live-cattle trade, £3,465,000." A Lancashire farmer asserts that "hides from the United States cattle killed at Birkenhead are sent back to the United States to be manufactured into leather goods, probably to be returned here again in boots, &c."

288

On the other hand it is urged by those who favour a higher duty on live than on dead meat that the importation of cattle for slaughter at British ports gives a great opening for the fraudulent sale of imported as British beef, and that in this way imported meat comes into direct and unfair competition with that which is home-fed. A Herefordshire farmer puts this argument thus:—"The imported live meat is largely sold as best English or Scotch, and thus competes

* In the House of Commons, on October 26th, 1906, the President of the Local Government Board stated that 418 tons of meat were seized and condemned at the Smithfield Market, between July 19th, 1906, and September 13th, 1906, of which 24 tons came from the United States and 232 tons from the Argentine Republic, and admitted the inefficiency of the existing law as to methods of inspection whereby this imported meat was permitted to come upon the market.

unfairly with the home producer; whereas imported dead meat must as a rule be sold for what it really is, and thus only competes with the second and low-class meats. If only dead meat were imported the poor could get cheaper meat, and those who could afford would willingly pay for English and get prime home-produced meat if they knew they would get it; but as things are they pay for English and get foreign." It would seem, however, that many of the farmers—especially Irish farmers—favour a higher duty on live meat on the erroneous assumption that the embargo on imported stores would at the same time be removed, thus again exposing the Irish store cattle trade to competition from Canada, the Argentine and elsewhere. It is also urged by some that the live-meat trade from abroad should be discouraged because of the suffering entailed upon animals in the sea transit.

A very strong and almost universal opinion is expressed in favour of some method of indicating to the consumer what is imported and what is home-fed meat, so as to prevent fraudulent sales. A Smithfield witness says he does not think the practice of selling foreign meat as English prevails largely with the retailer, but the evidence indicates a very widespread belief that many of the imported cattle are purchased by butchers and sold as "prime Scotch" and "British-fed" meat to the detriment of the British producer and also to the consumer, who pays the full English price. A Smithfield authority adds:—"If anything is to be marked, let it be our own goods and not the foreigners." The marking of foreign goods merely advertises them.

Marking of Meat

It is also urged that breeders, graziers and farmers generally would benefit by any duty on flour. As one Bedfordshire farmer puts it, a flour duty would be "to the advantage of millers, farmers, and all who keep horses, cattle, sheep or pigs, from the Shire horse to the cottager's pig." A Kilkenny farmer notes that the present price of good bran is £6 5s. per ton, and 50 years ago, when all flour consumed in Ireland was manufactured there, price was £2 per ton. With a duty on flour farmers could feed cattle "far cheaper and be in a better position to compete with foreigners' cattle." In consequence of the decay of the British milling industry there is, says an English miller, "something like a famine for wheat offals during the summer and autumn months, and it costs farmers and cottagers a lot more to feed their store and fat pigs, also other live stock. If we had the wheat ground in this country, wheat offals would be more plentiful." A Wellingborough miller urges that the drawback allowed under the 1s. registration duty was a mistake, because "it induced millers to export their offals." He says: "No drawback should be allowed, for these offals are re-exported to Denmark and come back as butter and bacon; some go to Brittany, chiefly bran. It is excellent food for milk and for cattle and pigs. The value of bran is very great. Farmers may have to pay more for their cake (under a system of import duties), but millers' offal will be cheaper. I make the finest bullocks round Wellingborough, and never use oilcake. A customer of mine, who has tried both, says that a bullock will get fatter, and, money for money, pay him more, on millers' offal than on the best of oilcake. The best stuff in imported cake and feeding stuffs is composed of the offal we re-export, and we pay more for it as oilcake than as offals." A milling engineer in his evidence states that for every sack of flour turned out there is 1 cwt. of offals for feeding cattle, and he calculates that were the flour that is now imported milled here instead of abroad the price of offals would be greatly reduced. "Foreigners do not sell the offals in their own country at very remunerative prices, but the quantity sent here from America is not to be compared with that of flour. The port millers here send their offals abroad because they can get a better price on the Continent at times, though there is a certain demand here for them, because the freight would be lower to Holland and Denmark than the railway rate on them if sent inland; that is to say, we are grinding wheat here and feeding the dairy farmers in Denmark." A Bedford miller indicates the effect of the 1s. registration duty in tending to reduce the price of bran, and adds: "The high price of bran and fine offals is one of a farmer's hardships, and still more to the poor man who keeps a pig and is the great consumer of the fine offal. The price of bran to some extent depends on the price of linseed and other feeding stuff with which it competes, on the size of the turnip and hay crops, &c. The demand for offals has been the salvation of the country miller. The best offal of the wheat is the intermediate portion between

Effect of a Flour
Duty upon the
British Stock
Raising

293

the bran and the flour. It is called by all kinds of local names—' sharps,' ' toppings,' ' pollards,' &c.—' middlings ' in our own neighbourhood. The very broadest bran goes to Ireland principally. It is much dearer in proportion to the price of flour than formerly, and it is much more valuable for feeding cows than flour itself; as ground wheat will not stand in the place of offals, the animals do not do so well on it." An Irish miller takes objection to the character of the American bran sent to British markets and says: " The best bran made in this country is from South Australian wheat, it is even like Irish wheat grown here."

Maize

294

The preponderating opinion of farmers, as given in evidence, would seem to be that maize should not be exempt from any scheme of taxation. It is used in some districts for feeding, but the most authoritative witnesses speak of it as a bad food for cattle and pigs, producing meat of a soft, oily and second-rate quality. " My experience with maize as a foodstuff for cattle," says the Chairman of the Cattle and Meat Trades' Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, " is that there never was a pound of best meat made by it, and never will be. It would be a great mistake to exempt maize and tax barley and other things which are better foodstuffs than maize." The head of one of the largest English retail provision houses notes that " the American pig is fed chiefly on maize and is the worst description of bacon that comes into this country, and fetches the lowest price." He adds that " if maize were admitted free and barley taxed, the quality of the pig would be considerably lowered. Maize would be used instead of barley-meal, and the English pig would deteriorate at once. If they had to pay a high price for taxed barley and could get maize without any tax upon it, we would not get the quantity of good pigs we do at present. If barley-meal were cheaper they would not use maize, but they *will* feed on the cheapest article." The Wiltshire evidence shows that from 1896 to 1900 a long series of experiments in pig-feeding was carried out under the auspices of the Wilts County Council, and it was then ascertained that the best results were attained by the use of barley-meal combined with dairy produce; while the use of maize was found to be most undesirable, except where sparingly used in conjunction with other foods. Pigs fattened on maize are worth from 20s. to 30s. per cwt. less than those fattened on barley-meal. The representative of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture says he looks upon maize " as the greatest competitor with all the second-grade cereals that the English farmer produces, and a duty on maize would not affect the poor man at all. It is not much used for the feeding of pigs but more for poultry. In feeding cattle we use maize as a mixture, but never by itself. I use more cakes than anything." A Wiltshire witness having a large experience denies that maize is largely used by the poorer classes in their diet or by agriculturists as a food for rearing live stock. Where, as in Lincolnshire, maize is largely used, it is very much a question of price which would be met by cheaper feeding stuffs of other and more suitable kinds. There is much evidence to a similar effect. A firm of Irish bacon-curers favours the free admission of maize because of the difficulty now experienced in getting the " ideal " food for pigs, namely, barley-meal and whey or barley-meal and milk. A Staffordshire bacon-curer admits that maize is not at all useful as a food when used alone, but a small proportion of maize—one part in eight, five of the other parts being barley—" gives a relish to the food and the animals are very fond of it."

295

296

Oilcake

The full consideration of the question of the production and supply of oilcake and of any measures in connection with it falls within the scope of the report on the Chemical and Allied Industries. The evidence of farmers shows that British beasts are to a very large extent fed upon imported oilcake from Germany, Belgium, Russia, France, Egypt, India, etc. The price is spoken of as fairly low, and farmers who use oilcake point to the disadvantage of increased cost. The experience of a Wellingborough farmer goes, however, to show the superiority of offals over oilcake as a feeding stuff. He says:—" I make the finest bullocks round Wellingborough and never use oilcake. A customer of mine who has tried both says that a bullock will get fatter, and, money for money, pay him more, on millers' offal than on the best of oilcake. The best stuff in imported cake and feeding stuffs is composed of the offal we re-export, and we pay more for it as oilcake than as offals."

The evidence relating to the English bacon-curing industry is practically confined to Wiltshire and Staffordshire, the two counties in which the industry is principally carried on. The present state of affairs, according to the opinions of witnesses, may be summarised as follows:—The best quality bacon and the highest priced bacon on the market is that produced here and in Ireland. The difficulty is not to find a market, but to get remunerative prices in view of rapidly increasing importations. The chief market hitherto has been London, with Manchester as a good second market, and English and Irish curers say that Danish and other imports are causing a loss of their control of these centres. Practically the entire product of Denmark is said to come here. The competition from Canada is also becoming more and more keen. In quality the English and Irish bacon is generally regarded as the best, the Danish second, then the Canadian, and last the American. But while the best English bacon is the best in the world, the second quality Danish is said to be better than the corresponding quality in England. An export trade with foreign countries being made practically impossible by tariffs, bacon-curers watch with especial uneasiness the curtailment of their home market by rapidly increasing foreign importations. As it is, they declare that nothing but trade in the best quality bacon has any chance, and they are precluded from successfully competing in the cheaper qualities. A member of the largest and oldest firm of Wiltshire bacon-curers speaks generally as to the state of his trade:—"Our home trade has steadily increased for years. Tariffs have prevented any volume of foreign trade. In the Colonies, with nominal or no tariffs, we do a large and increasing trade; but we cannot do so where prohibitive tariffs exist, as in Australia. We have suffered more heavily than any other industry from foreign competition." In Ireland bacon-curing is not, as in England, confined to a small area, but is carried on in many parts of the country. Profits have diminished and the production is represented as steadily diminishing during the preceding 20 years, until 1904 when there was a slight increase, while during the same time Continental production increased more than fourfold, the Canadian production increased enormously, and the American production remained very large. Owing to foreign competition Irish pig feeding is said to have become less remunerative, and the curer has consequently fewer hogs to handle. The British market for Irish bacon has been steady, but the export trade, except to Colonies, is almost nil.

In regard to pork the United Kingdom is spoken of as "simply the dumping ground of the poor American stuff." A Staffordshire witness says that in his experience the "bulk of fresh pork imported is Dutch small porks which would permit of a small duty without interference." If pork were taxed and bacon admitted free it might be, adds this witness, that pigs now coming in such large quantities from Holland, instead of coming as carcasses and fresh pork, would be salted and made into bacon, and so avoid any tax. The Secretary of the Bacon-Curers' Association also says:—"The Dutch export of pork to England is enormous, and in these proposals pork is treated as meat; if taxed as such it will be converted into bacon and come in free."

The trade in hams has been very considerably affected by imports, more especially in the speciality of dry hams. One firm alone is said to be doing about 6,000 American hams per week, "practically the whole of which has supplanted English products." Between 60,000 and 70,000 Danish hams are also said to come into London each week, and the competition in home trade is very severe, especially in the summer trade in London. "The American has monopolised that to a great extent, and the English ham is only asked for by the private consumers." Very little export trade in ham is done now, as compared with former years. A Staffordshire ham and bacon curer says:—"A large customer in London always advises us when the goods are for export, because they have to be specially dried to stand the damp in the hold of the ship. We missed his trade for some considerable time, and on asking him the reason, he said, 'All the goods you sent me were for South America, but the tariff now is about 37s. 4d. a cwt. They have some reciprocal treaty with the United States, whose goods go in at a much less tariff rate than ours; so the trade is completely gone'"

301 Lard

Lard refining, which was at one time a considerable industry in this country, is shown by the evidence to have been severely curtailed by competition, especially from the United States, Denmark and Canada. "At the present time," says a Gloucestershire bacon curer, "the manufactured article—both bacon and lard—is being sold in this country at less money than we pay the English farmer for the live hogs. This has brought about a very heavy fall in English hogs." It is urged that the heavy importations of lard amounting in value to nearly 4 millions sterling as against a little over £1,600,000 twenty years ago, might all be refined here to give employment to British labour. The fall in price of lard during the last 10 or 15 years is stated to have been about 50 per cent. Moreover, the former British export trade in lard is said to have been secured by the United States, which "has practically a monopoly in all foreign countries." Apart from the question of price, United States lard is shown to have gained a preference with British buyers by reason of the handy manner in which it is put up for sale. The *chef* in hotels and other places where large quantities of lard are used is said to prefer the American article because, for one thing, he gets the pail as a perquisite and sells it, and because when packed in the American pails the lard is easier to get at than when in a bladder, although the bladder lard is acknowledged to be better and go further. A considerable quantity of "imitation lard," the basis of which is refined cotton oil, from the United States is sold here, the sales amounting in one year, so it is said, to over 150,000 cwts.

302

Causes of Change

As is sufficiently indicated by the above paragraphs, the chief disability suffered in this country arises from the large and increasing importations of bacon, hams, &c., which, though generally inferior in quality to the best English and Irish article, materially interfere with the sale of superior English goods. Opportunities of expansion in the way of export trade are very few, for tariffs are said to prevent any volume of foreign trade. Those of France, Germany, America and Australia are specially instanced. A Ballymena bacon curer gives Brazil as an instance of a market which has been lost through the operation of tariffs. "Many years ago a very fair trade was done. That market has been practically closed to us. Possibly not more than twice were we able to ship goods to Newfoundland, and never to the United States. The United States tariff is £1 3s. 4d., and to Brazil it is higher. British hog products were exported to Australia once or twice some years ago. The tariff is about 20s."

303

Foreign Tariffs

Transport

Transport difficulties in competing with foreign countries are given as another general cause of complaint. A Northamptonshire witness says that he can get bacon carried more cheaply from the United States than from Ireland. Many witnesses from Wiltshire, as well as from other parts of the country, draw attention to this point. One witness gives tables of transport rates to show how they bear more heavily upon home firms than upon foreign competitors. Irish witnesses state that they are severely handicapped by transport rates in their competition with the United States and Denmark. A Limerick witness gives it as his opinion that foreign importations will end by wiping out the Irish curing trade. The Irish evidence also mentions among the causes of want of prosperity in the Irish industry the unsettled position of the land question, "which disinclines the small holder to produce pigs in quantity, as he does not wish to appear well off."

304

Remedial Measures

There are not more than half-a-dozen English and Irish expressions of opinion on the part of witnesses in favour of the exemption of bacon from import duty. Witnesses are agreed that bacon is no longer essentially the staple food of the poorer classes in this country, and that the poorest classes in this country eat much more pork, beef and mutton than they do bacon. Whereas the body of evidence as to the conditions of the industry comes from the important curing districts of the country in the West of England, on the question of the exemption of bacon there is a great quantity of evidence from all parts of England, Scotland and Ireland, as well as from the Bacon Curers' Association and merchants in London, and this evidence is all in favour of bacon being taxed. The evidence also indicates the difficulty that would arise from any differential treatment between bacon, pork and

hams. The evidence from Ireland is overwhelmingly in favour of the inclusion of bacon in any general scheme of taxation. It shows that in a very large number of districts pig meat, and especially cheap American pig meat, is eaten by the poor to the exclusion of other meat, but it is suggested that under an enlightened policy Irish pig producers are more interested as sellers than buyers of bacon. A Limerick and Cork witness says on this point: "In Ireland the poor eat a certain amount of American bacon, but they eat neither Canadian nor Danish, and it is a mistake to suppose that taxing bacon is taxing the poor man's food. The offals alone, the heads, &c., going out of our factories, ought to be able to feed the country without having American bacon at all; and if we had a larger production there is no doubt the offals would be very cheap food for the people." The Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Association says that "the farmer in Ireland is often found selling his pig at 4d. a lb. and buying this American stuff at 6d., and he is doing it with his eyes open. The only explanation I can give is that he sells his pig for cash and he buys his American bacon on credit." Great stress is laid in the evidence of the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and elsewhere, upon the great advantage that would accrue from the better education of farmers and curers in respect of hog products on somewhat the lines followed with so much success in Denmark.

(10) DAIRYING AND POULTRY FARMING.

Concurrently with the decline of corn-growing, dairying became one of the most remunerative forms of agriculture in many districts. The representative of the Berkshire and Oxfordshire Chamber of Agriculture, who has had twenty-five years' experience as land agent in ten different counties, says the change from wheat-growing to dairy-farming has been gradual, increasing enormously in the last ten years. But the evidence as a whole clearly indicates how much less remunerative it has now become; indeed, in very many cases the term "dairying" is now applied not so much to the making of butter and cheese as to the supply of milk to the large towns. The enormous influx of foreign dairy produce has driven very many dairy farmers to abandon the making of butter and cheese on any large scale, and devote themselves almost entirely to "milk-farming." There has, therefore, been a great increase of home competition in milk supply and a considerable fall in profits. In the words of a Kilmarnock dairy farmer, "No branch of farming, when the price is remunerative, makes such a quick return as milk, but now the increased competition among farmers is beginning to be more felt. Milk is our last resource. I cannot hold out a very cheerful view of the position. We began to feel this change about 1880." The President of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture quotes the case of a Leicestershire farmer who made £4,364 with an average of 100 cows in 1880 out of milk, and in 1900, with more cows, made only £2,630, "because, milk-farming becoming more common, prices have fallen." The representative of the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture speaks of milk selling as the salvation of many farmers, but, he adds, it is now becoming less remunerative. (See also "Milk" under "Animals and Meats.")

Dairying

So far as cheese and butter are concerned the evidence indicates a general lowering of prices and failure on the part of the British producer to keep pace with the enormous increase of home consumption. A representative of the Derbyshire Agricultural and Horticultural Society, referring obviously to purely local conditions, declares that not one-twentieth of the milk that used to be made into cheese and butter is made to-day. In former years, in isolated parts of the county, they all made cheese, and it is feared that, now the milk trade is being overdone, many of the former cheese makers will find themselves unable to go back to cheese-making, for they "have forgotten how to make it." The representative of the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture also indicates that "milk selling has been the salvation of many dairy farmers, but is now becoming less remunerative," and the representative of the East Suffolk Chamber of Agriculture mentions the increased cost of milking and labour generally as a reason why many farmers have given up even milk-producing.

309

The evidence of the representative of the Somerset Chamber of Agriculture and the South Somerset Farmers' Club indicates the character of the depression of the Cheddar cheese trade and the Somersetshire butter trade, largely owing to lower prices, though "as a rule the breeding of stock and the management of a good dairy pay better than the fattening of cattle." The Stilton cheese trade is, however, said to be holding its own. Prices have been latterly depressed, but, according to the representative of the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture, "the land where cheese is made has decreased very little in value. Stilton is a fashionable cheese, and makes a high price." In Cambridgeshire butter is said to be made "more for the purpose of getting the skim milk for the calves than for the butter itself." The farmers in South Wales are represented as all producing a fair quantity of butter, but profits have decreased, and farm-made butter, which twenty years ago fetched 1s. 2d. per lb., is now sold with difficulty at 9d. As regards Ireland, the conditions in many parts have been improved by co-operative methods and improved training. Fifteen years or so ago the butter-making industry in Ireland was in a very bad way, but the application of intelligence and capital to the problem and the gradual transformation of the business of butter-making from a home into a factory industry promises fruitful results. The evidence of the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society shows that there are now 400 creameries in operation all over Ireland wherever butter is made. The membership is close on 100,000, representing probably half a million people, who are directly interested in the movement, and the value of the annual output is between 1½ and 2 millions sterling. Butter-making is represented as less profitable than cheese-making, "but they do not make cheese instead of butter, because the farmer finds it more important to rear his calves, and it is not so easy to make cheese." There are other indications in the Irish evidence of the difficulties still to be overcome in the re-establishment of the Irish dairying industry. It is said by a Tipperary witness that "the head of the largest creamery and butter factory in Co. Tipperary stated that their principal profit was in margarine. They import an enormous tonnage of Russian fat. Another Tipperary witness declares that "the creameries have made the farmers and their families lazy and good for nothing. In former years butter about here made in the farm-houses used to fetch first price in Cork, now they sell milk at an average of about 4d. a gallon, which could not possibly pay, and they feed the calves on the wretched separated milk; the result is quite apparent in the miserable cattle." It is clearly brought out by the evidence as a whole that the permanent success of the dairying industry is largely dependent upon the success of other branches of agriculture. Dairying is carried on under the best conditions when stock-raising is successful, just as stock-raising is again most advantageously pursued in conjunction with crop-raising.

310

311

Causes of Change

312

The evidence from all parts of the country indicates how widespread has been the fall of prices for dairy produce in recent years. A Kerry farmer remembers the time when it was common to get in the local market £5 for a firkin of butter containing 77 lbs.; he has seen similar weights over a long series of years varying in price at different periods of the year from £2 to £3 a firkin according to quality. This condition of things, he says, has undermined a great industry, which has only been partially restored by the advent of creameries. The improvement in Ireland of recent years is indicated by a list of prices of butter published by the Irish Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which averaged 89s. 11d. per cwt. for the years 1886-7-8-9, and 96s. 7d. for the years 1900-1-2-3. The price was lower in 1904, but has since improved. A Yorkshire witness says it is quite impossible for Yorkshire farmers to make butter at 1s. 1d.! "We could afford to lose on the butter if we had a good business in milk, but then the farmers do not take back sufficient separated milk; we have it on our hands, and lose the 2d. per gallon." A Kilmarnock witness compares 70s. per cwt. obtained for best quality cheese twenty years back with the highest present price of 56s. In the Irish evidence the mortality in calves fed upon separated milk is mentioned as one of the drawbacks to the extension of co-operative dairying.

The enormous increase of imports is pointed to as the prime cause of the decrease of profits, and butter is mentioned as the article in which the keenest foreign competition is felt. Witnesses

say they have to take quite 16 per cent. less for butter than they did ten years ago, while their dairy cows when fattened for the butcher bring quite 30 to 40 per cent. less than they did fifteen to twenty years ago. The Chairman of the Council of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society notes that in winter time, owing to cold weather and importations from Denmark, Russia, &c., the price of butter falls 25 per cent. On the other hand, a London provision merchant points to the large import trade as having a steadying effect upon prices.

The slowness with which British farmers adopt improved methods is another cause pointed to in the evidence. A firm of butter merchants, for instance, says: "The trade in Siberian butter has become very large indeed within the last three years, so is the trade in Australian butter and in that from Argentine. The butter from these countries cheapens Danish butter, but does not displace it; but it takes the place of Irish butter, and of French butter to a considerable extent. Very few English farmers—none that I know of round Oxford—are capable of making fresh butter that people can eat. The best English fresh butter is now made in factories—I get my supplies from Devonshire and Somersetshire. We used to sell Italian and French fresh butter. English has now quite replaced it in my shop, because of its better quality and lower price." In Ireland the effect of imports has been to some extent lessened by the success of the co-operative dairy movement, and the opinion is expressed by English farmers that another result of this Irish movement has been to reduce the price of first-rate English farmers' butter quite 2d. per lb., owing to the importations of Irish butter into England through the medium of large butter companies. Among other causes named in the evidence as contributing to the present unsatisfactory condition of the dairying industry, are the difficulty, especially in Ireland, of getting satisfactory labour at prices that the farmer can pay; the export of breeding cattle, especially to South America, when the need of improved breeds is so much felt at home; the importation of condensed milk, and especially of margarine and other substitutes for butter; the lack of the training of farmers in up-to-date dairying methods such as have proved beneficial in Denmark, the United States, Canada, New Zealand and elsewhere; and the heavy burden of railway and local rates.

On the subject of margarine the following evidence of a British firm of margarine manufacturers may be quoted:—"Holland, Germany, Norway and France send us margarine. This is an article, every ounce of which could be manufactured in this country, and which would give an enormous impetus to farming owing to the immense amount of milk required for the process. It would mean something like 2,500 tons of milk per week required, for which the farmer receives $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the money he could possibly make out of butter or cheese. Foreigners cannot buy cheaper than we can. We have their prices for raw materials constantly before us as a check to our prices, but owing to most of the Dutch factories having German factories also, they get the benefit of a higher price in the protected area and can manufacture larger quantities, thus reducing on cost, and place large quantities on our markets below cost to keep their factories running night and day. The 10 per cent. butter-fat restriction here also assists them in the same direction, as it lets them oust us in neutral foreign markets. Hours are everywhere longer. Wages are not two-thirds of ours. We are over-inspected in every way; it handicaps the home employer when foreign workers have no restrictions as to hours, etc. Our railway companies also give preferential rates to sea-borne traffic." Another firm says—"Our foreign opponents have advertised all through the Colonies that by the laws in Great Britain, the manufacturers here are not allowed to make first-class margarine" owing to this limitation referred to above; and it is represented that British margarine manufacturers are handicapped in their competition in the Colonies.

Margarine

The evidence as regards railway rates is similar to that already quoted in respect of other classes of agricultural produce. "Margarine and butter," says a firm of Edinburgh provision merchants, "are sent over here in the smallest quantities weekly, direct to the towns at distance from the port of arrival, at through rates, which we cannot get here. They thus get the

Railway Rates

317

trade without paying rates, taxes, rent, or doing the duties of citizens in Great Britain. They may become our enemies after we have fattened them."

Remedial Suggestions

318

The evidence goes to show that in the opinion of those concerned in the making and sale of British dairy produce a system of moderate duties would help to secure greater continuity and security in the home trade and, in conjunction with a reasonable agricultural policy such as has been adopted in the chief competing foreign and Colonial countries, would promote economy by enabling British producers to do far more to meet home needs than they can now do. It is held that this can be done without any increased cost to the consumer. The prospect of increased Colonial supplies under a system of preference is also pointed to as a safeguard against loss to the consumer. One especially beneficial result from the national standpoint would, it is anticipated, be to increase the attractiveness of land for small cultivators and increase the number of small holdings in all suitable parts of the country. A witness who farms in Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire attaches much importance to the effect of a system of duties and anticipates "a great demand for small holdings" and "a great increase of agricultural occupation." The increased agricultural employment is estimated by some witnesses at 10 per cent., and an advance of 5 per cent. to 10 per cent. in agricultural wages would, some think, soon be justified. Some dairy farmers, such as the Nottingham Dairy Clubs, urge that no measures should be taken which would materially increase the cost of feeding stuffs.

Education and Co-operation

319

A few experiences are given in the English evidence of the benefits of agricultural education and training and co-operative methods. The representative of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Chamber of Agriculture bears witness to the improvement in the quality of the local-made butter after dairy classes held under the auspices of the local authorities, and strongly urges the extension of this kind of education. In Ireland there is much evidence of success in co-operative dairying, especially in the testimony of the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society and the extension of these methods is spoken of most hopefully. "We contemplate," says the secretary, "extending the system to what we call winter dairying, and applying it to the tillage districts. It is perfectly feasible and would be an enormous advantage to the people in these districts. It would be a means of providing profitable employment for people who now have to leave the country to seek it elsewhere. In order to carry out the scheme on that extensive scale we might have three times as many creameries as at present. 1,000 or 1,200 creameries would convert Ireland into a dairying country, and you would still be able to find a perfectly good market for the butter. At one time Ireland was producing £14,000,000 worth of butter in the year. There is no reason in the world why Ireland, if the butter is equally well made, should not take the place of Denmark altogether in the English market. Assuming we were able to extend our present dairying system to the whole of Ireland, and include the winter dairying as well, then the difficulty of a continuous market would disappear by degrees."

320

Evidence of a similarly hopeful character comes from parts of Wales. A Professor of the Department of Agriculture, Aberystwyth College, shows what has been done and says:—"It is all butter-making in these travelling dairy schools, no cheese-making. The meetings are held during the day in the village schools, and are well attended. In an ordinary average case there would be about 12 to 15 pupils, all girls. When we have had a school in a village that has given its course of instruction, we find as a consequence an improvement in the quality of the butter. There is not a great improvement, because Welsh people are very slow to adopt modern methods. Where we have adopted them there is an increase in the price they get for their butter. The butter we make at the college during the summer we have no difficulty whatever in selling at 1s. 2d. per lb., whereas the local farmers do not very often get 1s. There is always a great demand for butter made in the dairy school. It would improve our position very much if we could get a large and regular supply of the same quality. The dairy school is conducted during the summer, when the place is full of visitors, and our demand is very much greater than it is in winter." A Scotch witness who was

a member of the Scottish Agricultural Commission to Denmark dwells upon the applicability of Danish methods of education and co-operation to Scotland and England.

321

Other experiments in co-operative dairying such as those in Warwickshire and Dorsetshire are not so well spoken of. Their comparative failure is in part attributed to defective methods and prejudice on the part of the contributing dairy farmers.

The evidence of those engaged in poultry farming is largely concerned with the deterrent effect of foreign importations. It is pointed out in the Yorkshire evidence that labourers possessing a plot of land from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$ of an acre all rear poultry, but often cannot get a remunerative price, the markets being filled with foreign birds. From Norfolk and Cambridgeshire comes much the same report. Sussex and Surrey fowl breeders say that for their best produce they have always a ready sale at good prices, and can hardly produce too much, the great importation of foreigners having affected them little. It is the general complaint of those engaged in the dead poultry trade that foreign produce brought over in "freezers" is sold to their detriment.

Poultry and Eggs

322

As to eggs, the evidence shows that an egg costs a Norfolk farmer 2d. to produce at Christmas and about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in March or April. When the foreigners' low season coincides with our high one they have an enormous advantage. Reference also is made to the effect upon the farmers' trade in eggs of the heavy importations from France, Denmark, Russia, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium and other countries.

(11) MILLING.

The changes in the milling industry during the past two decades are shown in the evidence to be a natural sequel to our increasing dependence upon imported wheat. Small local mills have been closed in all parts of the country or relegated to grist grinding, bean crushing and the like for local farmers, and the bulk of the milling is now done at the ports. It is estimated by witnesses that there were in 1884 8,000 mills, wind, water and steam in this country, of which 7,000 or thereabouts were employed in grinding wheat, the remainder being grist mills; to-day the number is said to be 800 flour mills and 1,200 grist mills. Many specific instances of the decadence of country milling are given in the evidence. A certain number of inland mills fitted with modern appliances and conveniently situated for the trade still do a considerable business, but the great bulk of the wheat milled in Great Britain is handled by the great roller mills at the ports—Leith, Glasgow, Newcastle, Hull, Liverpool, Cardiff and Bristol—built there for the convenience and economy of handling imported wheat direct from the ship. The high efficiency of these port mills is generally admitted.

Milling

323

With few exceptions the witnesses deplore the decline of the milling industry in the country generally, especially in view of the loss to labour in the agricultural districts. Those who hold the view that the industry is not declining are speaking of the port mills—*e.g.*, "English milling is far from being a decayed industry. Liverpool has become during the last ten years the second milling centre in the world, and flour mills are still being erected there. They are all profitable concerns—some of them wonderfully profitable. Country millers (who are almost the only users of English wheat) are largely helped by the import of foreign flour—for mixture with flour from home-grown wheat."

324

Two points are clearly brought out in the evidence. (1) The great and increasing insufficiency of the supply of British-grown soft wheat to meet the home demand; and (2) the change which has taken place in the character of the flour in general use for bread-making since the early seventies. It has become increasingly difficult for millers to comply with the demands of their customers for a certain standard of flour, consequent upon their dependence upon imported hard wheat for their main supply. Several witnesses deal with the import of French soft wheats and flours made from them. "As an inland miller I find myself hampered by the ever-decreasing supply of English

English Wheat
Supplies

325

wheat. In consequence of the short supply of wheat I find the competition of the soft French flour." Another says:—"Weak French flour was sold in large quantities a few years ago at prices below those at which similar flour from English wheat could be manufactured." The necessity for a supply of soft wheat or flour made from them, to mix with the harder imported varieties, is recognised, but the competition is regarded as unfair, the French miller having undue advantages in rebate of duty, preferential rates, and the working of the "Acquit" system. One witness says:—"Millers cannot get sufficient without scouring the country 50 or 60 miles from their mills, where a short time ago it was obtainable within a radius of 15 or 20 miles."

American
Importations

326

The importation of United States flour and the question whether it is really "dumped" into British markets, occupy a prominent place in the evidence. The assertion is frequently made that the great United States flour mills, such as those of Minneapolis are kept running with the knowledge that any surplus production can be easily disposed of in England, and many witnesses say that the price of the United States flour in England is often below that of the same flour in New York. Others say that the dumping of the United States flour which has taken place in the past was "not of the best known brands but cheap and inferior qualities." Others, again, say the price is no higher for American flour in London, Liverpool and Glasgow than in New York, the price of the best known brands of American wheat is generally 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. above that of English.

Wheaten Starch,
etc.

327

Manufacturers of wheaten starch complain very strongly that their trade is severely handicapped by importations from Austria-Hungary and Germany. The average price of Irish wheaten starch is said to be about £20 per ton, while foreign wheaten starch is offered in British markets at £14 to £16 per ton. These are spoken of as "dumping prices." A Belfast manufacturer says that twenty years ago his firm used 68 tons of wheat weekly for conversion into starch; now only 35 to 40 tons. Also that thirty years ago there were eight wheaten starch makers in Belfast, while for the past twelve years his firm has been alone. Another firm says that it sent one or two considerable lots of wheat starch to America, but although it was preferred to the starch manufactured the business had to be relinquished as the duty amounted at that time to 40 per cent or 50 per cent. French trade has also been lost through foreign competition. A Glasgow firm complains that imports of starch and dextrine have more than halved the number of their employees. The manufacture of cornflour is stated to have decreased owing to cheap imports from the Continent. The United States also actively competes, not only in cornflour but in maize starch. The latter commodity is generally £4 to £5 per ton cheaper than that made in this country, and the belief is expressed that this foreign starch is placed on our market under the cost of production in the country of origin.

(12) CO-OPERATION.

Co-operation

328

The evidence received in regard to co-operation and market organisation is stated in summary form in Section V. of this Report (Sections 1244-1254). It indicates how little has been done in the way of serious and systematic co-operative organisation in Great Britain, though in Ireland, as shown in the evidence of the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society (Paragraphs 720 *et seq.*) the progress has been marked. It would seem that where agricultural co-operation has been a success in Great Britain it has been chiefly in the purchase of farmers' supplies, and witnesses from Wiltshire, Somerset, Leicestershire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire and other counties suggest the large field there is for its extension. In Worcestershire and Staffordshire witnesses say they gain 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. by the co-operative buying of their implements, seeds, manures and feeding stuffs, and the benefits arising from the operations of the West Norfolk Manure Co. are specially referred to in the evidence from the Eastern counties. Reference is also made in the evidence to other co-operative and farmers' supply associations which enable farmers to obtain manures, feeding stuffs, and implements on more advantageous terms than would otherwise be secured, but outside Ireland there is little evidence of the systematic adoption of co-operative principles as understood in countries which are our chief competitors in agricultural produce.

The evidence of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society shows that in co-operative creameries there is a membership of nearly 100,000 people, mostly heads of families, so that half-a-million of persons in Ireland may be said to be directly interested in this branch of co-operation alone. So indispensable is co-operation deemed by this Society (which itself has been so largely instrumental in promoting the co-operative movement in Ireland on its present lines) that the secretary states it as his opinion that without it the Land Purchase Act cannot be permanently successful. He says :—" It is very little use for the State to put people in possession of the land and to change their annual rental to an annuity, even if that annuity is considerably less than the amount of the rent which they used to pay, unless they at the same time place these people in a position to buy the raw materials for their industry at bedrock prices and to sell their produce to the greatest advantage. If that is not done, the mere creation of a peasant proprietary among these small men may prove to be something else than an unmixed blessing. Without co-operation among these small men the peasant proprietor in a few years will be in as bad a plight as when he was a tenant farmer." Creamery dairying is on the increase in Ireland, as it pays better than the ordinary system of dairying on non-co-operative lines under which each farmer makes his own butter and has to find a market for it. The approximate value of the annual output of the co-operative creameries in connection with the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society is stated to amount already to between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000. " We are now," observes the Secretary of the Association, " gradually coming to the point where we can apply co-operative methods to practically every branch of the agricultural industry, and with great success in particular to the marketing of agricultural produce. We have solved the problem in butter, we are solving it in eggs, but when you come to deal with grain, for instance, the sale of barley to either the maltsters, the brewers, or distillers, you find that a very difficult matter." The evidence shows the improvement in the quality of butter which has resulted from the action of the creameries, to which the farmer simply delivers the fresh milk, taking away the separated. Nor are the advantages confined to quality only, for whereas under the old system 3 gallons of average milk yielded 1 lb. of butter, now the average is 1 lb. of butter from 2½ gallons. The butter is made and sold at the creameries at a cost of about 7s. per cwt. Creameries have been established either in connection with the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society or independently, in all parts of Ireland, as shown by the reports of witnesses in Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Donegal, Antrim, Londonderry, &c. Agricultural co-operation in general has been more extensively adopted in the South of Ireland than in the North.

But though systematic co-operation for the sale of produce as well as the purchase of farmers' requisites has been so little adopted in the United Kingdom outside Ireland, the evidence shows how many districts there are in various parts of the country in which farmers realise the need of the adoption of methods which are proving so successful in Ireland and other agricultural countries. One difficulty which is again and again mentioned in the evidence as standing in the way of the extension of co-operative buying is the want of ready money on the part of farmers. A Wiltshire witness says :—" We carried on for 15 years a co-operative business, turning over from £30,000 to £40,000 a year, but owing to farmers being so short of money, it fell through," and similar evidence is given by other witnesses. Other evidence as to the failure of co-operation may be classified under three heads : (1) Bare statements of the fact that co-operation in a certain district has been tried and had failed. This evidence comes from districts as far apart as Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Londonderry, Galway and Lanark. (2) The evidence of witnesses who lay the blame of failure on bad management. (3) The evidence, also from widely-separated districts, of witnesses who attribute failure to the difficulty of getting farmers to combine. One witness says :—" The society failed from want of support from the farmers." Another :—" As to co-operation amongst farmers in my district in buying and selling, you cannot get them to, I am sorry to say." A third witness says :—" The farmers in my neighbourhood will never unite." A Bedfordshire farmer says :—" The Board of

333

Agriculture have been trying to get some 20 of the gardeners on one of the small estates to amalgamate and send their produce to London together, but have given it up in disgust; the men did not appreciate their efforts."

334

Some English witnesses assert that while co-operation may be beneficial for small farmers the large farmer buys and sells in sufficiently large quantities to be able to get equally good terms as would be granted to any co-operative body. The evidence indeed shows that in the opinion of witnesses the advantage of co-operation is especially marked in the case of small holdings. The Irish Agricultural Organisation Society for instance is confident that "when small farmers learnt the advantage of co-operating, they would very soon join, and then by means of their societies the Association would be able to get reforms carried out more quickly. Out of some 500,000 farmers in Ireland we have 200,000 who live on holdings of between 1 and 15 acres. But it is to these very small men whom you would hardly dignify by the title of farmers that our co-operative work has been so beneficial. It is only by association with his neighbours that the small holder can possibly hope to get for his produce on the market anything like a reasonable price."

Co-operation
Abroad

The evidence indicates the benefit derived from co-operation in competing foreign countries, The co-operative system of Holland, for instance, enables Dutch farmers to make butter of a uniform quality and put it on the market to more advantage than can the English farmer. In France, co-operative marketing by small holders, and particularly the small fruit growers, is largely practised. "French vegetables and fruit, before coming here, are graded by the dealer, so that on leaving his hands, it is no longer the mixed produce of A., B. and C., but uniform, and the individual fruit grower's interest in the produce is absolutely lost." This method, however, can only be carried out when small growers sell their crops outright to dealers on the spot. Several witnesses extol the Danish system of co-operation as regards meat and dairy produce, and, referring to attempts which have been made to establish large co-operative bacon-curing factories on the lines of those in Denmark, it is pointed out that so long as we keep to our present system, we cannot hope to compete with the foreign farmer. Other evidence shows that Danish farmers keep a larger stock of cows and pigs per acre than any other country and that the pigs are turned into bacon at the least possible cost, as the farmers have their own joint dairies and slaughterhouses in every district within easy reach of the farm, thus lessening cost and promoting uniformity of quality.

335

(13) RENT, RATES AND TAXES.

Rent

336

Very little complaint respecting rent is made in the evidence of farmers in any part of the United Kingdom. Such references as are made indicate a heavy fall in recent years. A Cambridge-shire farmer says:—"Rents began to go down heavily 20 years ago, in some cases more than half. For some time landlords would not reduce their rents and the farms remained on their hands, but nearly all the land is let now at some price or other." One of the representatives of the Northamp-tonshire Chamber of Agriculture notes that the rent of his home farm has fallen from 26s. to 16s. a acre, and adds: "that would be more than the average reduction, mine being an exceptionally bad farm to meet the times. . . . My balance-sheet comes out better for me now than it did when I was paying the high rents." In Dorsetshire the rents of heavy lands are said to have fallen about 50 per cent. Evidence as to substantial rent reductions also comes from Somersetshire, Leicester-shire, Kent, Norfolk and other counties. Some farmers in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Hants, Sussex and Wales say that rents are now much the same as they were some years ago, but where once they made fair profits, now they hardly hold their own. In parts of Scotland rents have considerably decreased, some sheep farms being hard to let. Irish farmers from Antrim, Down, Tipperary, Roscommon and other counties report rent reductions in the last 25 years, ranging from 35 to 50 per cent.

From farmers in all parts of the United Kingdom come complaints of the growth of local rates in view of the fall in the price of produce. A Surrey farmer states that his rates are three times as much as they were a few years ago, and the general increase in the last ten years varies in different counties from 50 to 100 per cent. The increased education rate is also frequently referred to, and in the Kent evidence it is said, in some cases, to have swallowed up the allowance made under the Agricultural Rates Act.

Local Rates 337

The testimony is general that the tenant farmer reaped the full benefit of the Agricultural Rates Act, no attempt being made on the part of the landlord to raise the rents or take any share of the advantage. The following are typical extracts from the evidence bearing upon this point:—
 “I have not heard of a single landlord getting any benefit; the Act saves me £35 per annum in rates.” “We get material relief from the Agricultural Rates Act, otherwise the rates would now be insupportable. The benefits of this Act have gone entirely to the tenants. I do not know of a single instance of rents being raised in consequence. On the contrary, I have known of several reductions of rents since that Act was passed. If any rents were raised it would be under some special circumstances.” “Naturally when a farm changes hands the Act is taken into consideration by both landlord and tenant, but under existing tenancies the farmers have the whole gain, amounting often to half the rates.”

Agricultural Rates Act 338

The many and widespread complaints of farmers on the subject of railway rates are summarised under each branch of agriculture.

Railway Rates

(14) LABOUR AND WAGES.

The progressive decline of agriculture has had a marked effect upon agricultural employment. The evidence showing this marked effect is summarised under the various branches of agriculture, and should be read in conjunction with the table on the Numbers Employed in Agriculture, 1851–1901, to be found in Table 34. The reduction in the number of agricultural labourers which is now less than half what it was forty years ago is attributed in the evidence to various causes, most of which are traceable to the main cause—namely, the changed conditions in recent years brought about by foreign competition. Arable land being let down to grass, corn giving place to cattle, imported meat displacing home-grown, the increased use of machinery—these are among the chief causes tending to lessen the amount of labour required; while the attractions of town life, the inducements held out by such Colonies as Canada, the uncertainty and irregularity of agricultural labour, the regulation requiring children to be kept at school until 14, and the objection to Sunday labour are all spoken of as reasons why farmers in many districts of the United Kingdom now find it difficult to get even the labour for which they could find employment. In many instances it is, however, added that if the prospects of farming were improved there would be no difficulty in attracting good workers back to the land at fair wages.

Labour 339
Causes of Change

Fruit farms are said to employ more hands than formerly at double the wages obtained by agricultural labourers. Fruit also employs labour in subsidiary industries such as basket-making, etc. About 1,150 acres have been put under glass in England within the last 20 years, employing 7,000 hands and representing £368,000 a year in labour. Casual labour is largely used in this industry, especially in fruit-picking. Fruit-canning would give great scope for English labour, but foreign competition prevents any substantial development at present, foreign imports injuring the trade in bottled and tinned fruits and vegetables as well as in other branches of the industry. Few complaints of labour scarcity come from fruit farmers and market gardeners, but this may possibly mean that fruit-growing has not been attempted in districts where casual and other labour is not easily obtained. It is noted that no product of the soil employs so many persons per acre as hops, and the evidence shows that there is no difficulty in obtaining all the casual labour required in picking, etc.

340

341 Deterioration of Labour

The decline of agriculture has had its effect on the quality of the labourer. The prevailing impression is that the best men have abandoned agriculture, and the labour material left is often spoken of as inferior. The following typical extracts may be quoted from the evidence :—"The man does not work so hard, because he knows that his master cannot fill his place." "The labourer will not do an honest day's work." "They know less about agricultural work and will not be told." Specific instances are given. Milkers and especially dairymaids are in some districts spoken of as singularly incompetent; hedge-cutting, draining, stacking, and thatching are accomplishments which the younger generation of labourers seems unable to acquire. Even plough boys are sometimes said to be deteriorating, and "it is extremely difficult to find a young labourer who is a good shepherd or stockman." On the other hand, some of the farmer witnesses speak appreciatively of their labourers, and the opinion is expressed that "if you put the farmer in a position to pay a better wage and the landlord to provide him with a better home" the question of quality of labour would be satisfactorily solved.

342

From the farm labourer's point of view the evidence shows that the absence of permanent employment leads him to seek other industries for more regular work for himself, and also to train his children to regard agriculture as an unprofitable engagement. The farmer threatened on the one hand with falling prices and on the other hand with the emigration of labour, is bound to utilise the "unsatisfactory casual labour which has been thrown out of work in towns." "An all the year round permanent labourer is not difficult to get; it is irregularity of employment which helps to make good labour scarce."

Wages

343

The rate of pay among agricultural labourers is shown in the evidence to vary greatly, an agricultural labourer receiving from 7s. to 14s. per week in Ireland to 20s. in Scotland, and up to 21s. in England. Comparisons are difficult, because many farmers allow their men perquisites of various kinds. "Our standard wage to-day is 14s., horsekeepers, married men living on the farm 14s. with house rent, firing, all the potatoes they want and their harvest." (Huntingdonshire.) "Carters and shepherds 17s. to 20s. a week and their cottage." (Sussex.) "A good horseman £26 a year, and 9s. per week for board." (Lincolnshire.) "Man, wife and children earn 7s. to 8s. per day. We give lodgings but no food." (Kent.) "I pay 9s. a week with a house and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of land." (Wicklow.) "Able-bodied men receive 10s. or 12s. and a cottage with land, potatoes and vegetables, or they live with the farmer." (Antrim.) It is generally agreed that agricultural wages have risen during the last thirty years, the amount of the increase differing according to locality and circumstances.

344

Wages have increased largely for casual farming labour, especially at particular seasons of the year when the demand is great, such as for harvesting, haymaking, and hop-picking. Labour employed in fruit-growing has increased from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. per week, and women's wages have risen in some cases 30 per cent. Piece work has advanced in price 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. Moreover, perquisites, including house rent, potato ground, coal, cider, harvest money, etc., would seem not to have diminished with rising wages, but increased. The farmers' complaint against high wages is based on the ratio existing between the latter and the low prices he gets for his produce. "If prices were better the rate of wages would increase more," is confidently stated by a number of witnesses.

(15) COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION.

Cottage Accommodation

Witnesses deal with the following points on the question of cottage accommodation : -(1) The general insufficiency of cottages in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and parts of England; (2) Caused in some degree by defectiveness of existing buildings. (3) The effect of insufficiency in leading to the

emigration of labour to towns. (4) The improvement in the last 15 years. (5) The expensiveness of building cottages. (6) The number of cottages which are not occupied by agricultural labourers. (7) The causes for cottages being untenanted.

(1) Witnesses complain of insufficiency of cottage accommodation in Ireland, Wales and Scotland generally, and in a number of English counties. These complaints occur even in districts where many cottages have been and are being built by local authorities. In Ireland "many cottages have been built by the Poor Law Guardians, but a great many more are wanted—as many again as have been built already." In some instances no cottages are being built, notwithstanding their pressing necessity. "In Scotland there must be fewer cottages than thirty years ago," according to a witness who states that "there is urgent need all over the country for more cottage accommodation." "In Wales absolutely nothing has been done. Cottage accommodation is deficient both in quality and quantity, quality worse than quantity, and that accounts very largely for the labourers leaving the land. Many cottages have been allowed to tumble down, none have been built." A Suffolk witness says:—"If we could provide men with a good cottage we could keep them. We had a population at Ixworth when I first came of 1,000; now it is reduced to 800." Many witnesses point out that in the interests of both farmer and labourer more cottages are wanted, and that this is an important factor in the agricultural situation.

**Insufficiency
of Cottage
Accommodation**

(2) The demand for cottages appears to arise very often on account of the existing dwellings being defective. The cottages built by some landowners, especially the smaller men, have been neglected owing to want of capital, and farmers attribute the scarcity of labour partly to this cause. "Some of the cottages that are occupied (in Dorsetshire) only just escape the sanitary laws; they are too crowded, many cottages have only two bedrooms." Most of the complaints refer to old cottages, many of which are falling into decay, and are not likely to be rebuilt. Few of the new cottages are objected to on grounds of defective utility or sanitation, but more than one witness opposes public money being spent on them, because "these cottages are most uncomfortable and insanitary." "That has something to do with the dissatisfaction of the younger generation. If you have a good house with good accommodation you can always get a more respectable family into it."

**Defective
Dwellings**

(3) Under existing conditions the insufficiency of cottages in many districts has a serious effect upon the supply of labour. According to one witness, "many young men whom we have in our houses have to go to the towns when they marry because we have not cottages for them." It is generally agreed that with additional cottages an adequate supply of labour might be kept upon the land, which would check the migration into the towns.

**Effect upon
Labour**

(4) During the last fifteen years, however, cottage building in rural England has increased considerably, and in Ireland recent Acts of Parliament have assisted in a similar development. An Irish witness says:—"The local Poor Law authorities have power to compulsorily take sites for labourers' cottages with one statute acre of land. These powers have been largely used, and the cottages and land, provided at a very small rent, have been the very greatest benefit to the labourers." In fruit-growing districts the considerable demand for further cottage accommodation is being met to a certain extent. An Evesham witness says:—"We are badly off, especially in some villages, but building is being begun on 20 per cent. cheaper lines, and the cost of cottages will soon be greatly reduced. Eight cottages are being built in Evesham and 100 applications have been made for them already." Cottages are mostly well built nowadays, the authorities having plans submitted to them and refusing to allow thatched or wooden cottages on the ground of risk from fire.

**Recent
Improvement**

(5) Some witnesses complain of the expensiveness of cottages built as insisted upon by local authorities. They could be built in rows much cheaper than in pairs, but the former method is not allowed according to the rules laid down by the Local Government Board. An Irish witness, who complains of a lack of cottages in his district, says that many are being built out of the rates to be let

**Cost of Cottage
Building**

349

considerably under cost price, two-thirds of the cost being paid out of the rates. In some districts this extra rate, occasionally 2d. in the £, is very unpopular, no attempt being made to build cheap cottages which would pay for themselves. The cost of building a cottage is stated at from £150 to £250. In many cases a quarter to an acre of land is included in the cost of the cottage. A Suffolk witness quotes the fact that in 1892 the local Rural District Council built, under the Housing of the Working Classes Act, eight cottages in pairs, with a quarter acre of land attached to each. Each cottage cost rather more than £200, land included. Rent is commonly about 1s. a week, if the cottage is occupied by a *bona fide* labourer; but, as a Sussex witness points out, in districts where farm cottages have become vacant owing to fewer men being required on the farms, they have been taken by artisans and others who are able to pay from 4s. to 5s. per week rent, so that it is becoming almost impossible for an agricultural labourer to find a house for 2s. or 2s. 6d. a week, which is all he can afford. A Hertfordshire witness states that in his district six-roomed cottages have been built and let at 5s. 6d. to 6s. 6d., the usual rent being 8s. in the London district, where builders get Trade Union wages.

350

Cottages for General Labourers

(6) In districts where new cottages have been built specially for agricultural labourers, many have become tenanted by artisans, stonemasons, carpenters, blacksmiths and others who do not work on the land. There are complaints of a somewhat similar nature from Ireland, where witnesses are agreed that the cottages, with $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 acre of land attached, that have been built largely within the last ten years, are a great improvement as habitations, but they add that they are not given to the proper labourers. They are too often, according to the evidence, given to people who are of no use to the country, or even to men who never did a day's labour. But where they are given to genuine farm workers it is agreed that they are very useful. Another point dwelt upon in this connection by Irish witnesses is that under the present system of building labourers' cottages, when a man occupies such a cottage he becomes independent, and is then inclined rather to take up the business of a small dealer than to remain an agricultural labourer. Cottage-building, in short, is said to be producing a class which is neither labourer nor farmer.

351

Causes of Non-Occupation of Cottages

(7) In some parts of England and Ireland too many cottages have been built—some wastefully, some in the hope of attracting labourers to the land, while in others they have been deserted because there is no longer use for the labourer. In other cases cottages have been unwisely built, too far from the centre of employment. Sometimes too much land is attached to the cottages, with the result that all the tenant's time is occupied with his own work and he had no time to give to the farmers. In Ireland farmers have become prejudiced against giving sites on their land for cottages to be built, over which they will have no control.

(16) LAND PURCHASE.

Land Purchase

352

The evidence indicates the considerable demand in rural districts for further facilities to enable both farmers and labourers to become owners, and it is urged that an enlargement of the number of proprietors would do much to check rural depopulation and increase the proportion of home supplies of food produce. Mr. J. L. Green, secretary of the Rural Labourers' League, submits a memorandum in explanation of the Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill which Mr. Jesse Collings has brought before the House of Commons, and indicates the possibilities of improving the agricultural position under the operation of such a measure. *(See Memoranda.)*

The main conclusions to which we are led by the evidence as to the present condition of agriculture are as follows :—

Conclusions

1. The production of wheat in the United Kingdom, which in the period 1841-45 was sufficient for 24 million persons or nearly 90 per cent. of the population, has since that time steadily declined until home-grown wheat now feeds little more than $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions, or 10·6 per cent. of the population.
2. With the single exception of oats in England, all other corn crops in the United Kingdom show considerable decline, though in no case to the same extent as wheat. Taking corn crops as a whole, the area cultivated has declined 3 million acres, or nearly 40 per cent., in the last thirty years.
3. This serious reduction in corn cultivation has synchronised during the last thirty years with a decline amounting to over one-sixth in the area under green crops.
4. The area under grass has increased by nearly one-third in the same period; this increase has not sufficed to make up for the decline in arable cultivation, and the quantity of meat produced from home-fed stock has only increased by less than 5 per cent.
5. Whereas home-fed meats represented 85 per cent. of the total consumption thirty years ago, they now represent 55 per cent. only.
6. The importations of dairy produce have increased about 140 per cent. during the last thirty years, and dairy-farmers in most parts of the United Kingdom have been led to devote themselves more and more to milk farming, in which foreign competition has not developed to any extent.
7. The dependence of the United Kingdom upon imported food supplies of all kinds has increased from 124 to 205 millions sterling since 1875, and allowing for the fall in prices, the volume of food imports is estimated to have increased during the same period by 130 per cent., or nearly four times as much as the increase in population.
8. The foreign producer, especially of wheat and meat, has not only supplied the increased British home demand due to increased population and increased consuming power of the population, but has also taken from the British farmer a large part of the market upon which, having no export trade, his existence depends.
9. Agriculture in almost every branch shows a great decline, despite a very large increase in the population and a consequent increase in the demand for agricultural produce.
10. There has been a general fall of prices during the last 30 years due to monetary and other causes affecting nearly all commodities, and fluctuations of this character are to be anticipated in the future. But the prime cause of the decline in agriculture is the greater fall, especially in the case of corn, in agricultural prices than in prices generally.
11. In the case of agriculture the effect of the fall in prices has been accentuated by other causes, such as (A) the greater relative increase in the burden of local and Imperial taxation upon the land; (B) transport conditions; and (C) the inability of the Board of Agriculture to aid the British farmer as his foreign competitors are aided.

354

355

356

12. The position of the United Kingdom is absolutely exceptional. No other country shows so marked a decline of agriculture ; no other country depends to so large an extent upon importations from abroad for its food supply ; in no other country has the balance between agriculture and manufacturing industries been so completely disturbed to the disadvantage of agriculture. This remarkable decline of agriculture is not alone a menace to national security, but by restricting the home market must have a most prejudicial effect upon the general industry of the country.

Causes of Decline

The causes of the decline of agriculture are world-wide in their operation affecting all importing countries. The striking feature in the case of the United Kingdom is that agriculture has been more depressed than in any other country, and more depressed than any other branch of economic activity. But the decline has not affected all branches of agriculture at the same time or in the same degree. The statistics printed in the body of this Report show that for a long period the course of meat prices in the United Kingdom was steadily upward, counterbalancing in some degree the contrary movement in regard to the prices of cereals. But during the last 25 years, the course of all agricultural prices has been in the same downward direction, with the result that agriculture has been subject to a great combination of causes all tending towards its depression. Moreover, the depression in the United Kingdom has been made more severe by the operation of causes entirely peculiar to the United Kingdom.

The National Policy of Foreign Countries

In the first place there has been, within the period we have reviewed, a broad contrast between the policy adopted by foreign countries and that adopted by the United Kingdom. Generally speaking all foreign and European countries accept as the basis of their economic policy the necessity for maintaining a flourishing agriculture. This is partly due to economic reasons, partly to considerations of national defence and security. The result, speaking generally, is that these countries instead of pursuing an exclusively manufacturing or an exclusively agrarian policy, have endeavoured to maintain a balance between agriculture and manufactures.

State Organisation

This different conception of the basis of public policy and of the relations between the State and agriculture in foreign countries, as contrasted with the United Kingdom, has exercised an important influence upon the general methods adopted for stimulating agriculture. Many witnesses before the Committee have drawn attention to the great advantages which have followed to agriculture in foreign countries through the organisation on a great scale of State Departments with extensive powers for aiding agriculturists. A review of some of the methods which have been adopted on the Continent is given in the evidence, from which it is clear that both in the organisation of their State Departments and in the money they spend in the promotion of agriculture foreign countries have gone far ahead of the United Kingdom.

Encouragement of New Industries

The activity of foreign State Departments has been particularly marked in the encouragement they have given to new industries or the improvement of those already established, by making experiments which are not likely to be undertaken by private individuals, by the provision of expert advice and assistance, by State loans, and other methods. We may take for example the growth of tobacco, in which case the evidence shows that both in Ireland and in wide districts of England the culture of tobacco could be successfully undertaken but for the operation of the present Revenue Laws. Evidence again is given showing satisfactory grounds for believing that, so far as natural conditions are concerned sugar beet could be grown here more cheaply and with a larger percentage yield of sugar than in Germany and other countries where this industry is firmly established. But so long as agriculturists have to face without any assistance from the policy of the country the ruthless competition

to which they are subject from firmly-established industries of foreign countries, they cannot be expected to invest capital in this branch of activity. The conditions appear to be favourable to the establishment of the industry in England, provided an alteration of policy were effected. It is the opinion of experts that, except perhaps in the earlier stages of its development, no direct Government assistance would be necessary other than a rebate and the maintenance of the present duty on sugar.

361

The agricultural policy of foreign countries has found expression on the Continent in the more intimate relations of States and Railways. Scarcely any factor in the present situation is made so frequently the ground of complaint by witnesses before the Committee as the operation of railway rates. There is a wide sense of grievance among agriculturists as to the conditions affecting the conveyance of their produce to markets. In the evidence the term "undue preference" appears to be used somewhat loosely, and is not to be understood under its strictly legal significance. The exact position appears to be as follows. At the present time, taking the agricultural imports of the United Kingdom, the traffic is concentrated at a comparatively few ports. At these ports there is frequently competition both by land and water in the conveyance of produce to large urban consuming centres. Large consignments, steady and continuous traffic, little or no breaking of bulk, uniform methods of packing, all these conditions exist along the main arteries for the conveyance of the imported produce from the ports to the consumer.

Transport

362

Hence railway rates in these circumstances are relatively low, and while, according to the Report of the Departmental Committee, it cannot be said that there is any "preference" to the foreign importer over the British agriculturists in regard to these routes for similar traffic conveyed under similar conditions, the evidence seems to establish the fact that in many instances quoted by witnesses the railway rates from the outlying districts to the centres of population are in fact higher than they are along these principal arteries of commerce. The net result of such a tendency in the arrangement of railway rates is to bring within easy reach of the British market producers in the distant parts of the world and relatively to remove the British agriculturist farther off. Hence it is often found that in districts of the United Kingdom of unbounded fertility, geographically near to large consuming centres, the rates which the British agriculturist is charged, in the circumstances we have described, make it impossible for him to compete on equal terms with the foreign importer. While the British agriculturist is thus handicapped, the control and regulation of the transport system at the disposal of his Continental competitor has long formed part and parcel of the general economic policy of foreign countries. The Continental exporter of agricultural produce to the United Kingdom receives aid through the agency of State railways, while at the same time these railways are used to throw obstacles in the way of foreign competition in the home markets of these countries.

363

Over and above these methods of State organisation, European countries generally have pursued a policy involving import duties on agricultural produce, whereas in the United Kingdom agriculturists have been subject to the unrestricted importation of foreign produce on terms not dissimilar, in many cases, from those experienced by manufacturers who complain of dumping.

Fiscal Policy

364

REMEDIAL MEASURES.

We are of opinion that, for removing the disabilities under which British agriculturists suffer, a change in the fiscal policy of the country is absolutely necessary, but if this change is to be permanently effective it must be combined with measures dealing with transport, the enlargement of the powers of the Board of Agriculture and local taxation. We are also of opinion that the position of the industry generally would be improved if means could be found to create further facilities for land purchase in the United Kingdom.

Remedial Measures

One of the difficulties in the way of lower rates for agricultural produce is the fact that the volume and concentration of the traffic at inland centres, as distinguished from the ports, are not sufficient to secure to home produce the advantages accorded to imported produce. We do not think that this disparity can be removed either by pressing the railway companies to grant lower rates where the conditions for such rates do not exist, or by urging that farmers may themselves secure them by methods of co-operation. Neither the increase in the volume of traffic nor adequate means of organisation is likely to be obtained in a falling market for agricultural produce. In dealing with the transport difficulty we may point out that the railway statistics now available do not permit of a sufficiently precise definition of the problem we have to consider. We think, therefore, that the first step must be the collection of information from the railway companies showing clearly in what respects, if any, the British agriculturist is handicapped by freight charges in his competition with the foreign importer. The Board of Agriculture should, we think, be empowered to obtain such information from the railway companies. The Board should then initiate conferences with representatives of the railway companies and the agricultural interests affected, to consider by what means these various interests could best co-operate to secure the necessary conditions for lower freight rates. The information laid before us suggests that these conferences would probably show that in present circumstances the traffic does not exist in a sufficiently concentrated form to make it worth the while of the railway companies to provide on their own initiative the facilities desired in many districts, and that, on the other hand, agriculturists could not in the first instance raise the capital required for the application of co-operative methods on an adequate scale. Where this is found to be the case we think that the State, on the recommendation of the Board of Agriculture, should provide some initial financial assistance either by loan or guarantee to properly accredited bodies of agriculturists for the purpose of establishing such co-operative methods.

For the establishment of new agricultural industries, and for the improvement of those already established, we find that in most foreign countries, and in our own Colonies, the State Department has large powers for the carrying out of experiments, and for giving assistance to agriculturists in their localities through the agency of trained experts, who visit the different districts, and often reside there for a period, getting into personal touch with the farmers and others. These methods, which vary according to the necessities of the different countries, have been followed with results of the greatest practical value, and have been shown to involve comparatively little expense. We think that the Board of Agriculture should be entrusted with similar powers, an annual grant of money being made for the purpose.

The witnesses we have examined are unanimous in attaching great importance to the question of local taxation. They complain that the rate burden on agricultural lands, as compared with other kinds of property is excessive, and continues steadily to increase notwithstanding the Agricultural Rates Act, by which they agree the burden was sensibly mitigated. Few measures in modern times have been more keenly criticised, and mainly on the ground that the relief intended for the tenant would be intercepted by the landlord for his own benefit. Witnesses from all parts of the country who are themselves occupiers, or representative of large associations of occupiers, maintain that they have never heard of any case in which the landlord has attempted to appropriate the advantages of the Act to himself, and they declare that the whole of the benefit has been undoubtedly enjoyed by the occupiers of the land. Since the passing of the Act the burden of taxation on the land has been made more severe by fresh rates, especially in connection with the Education Act of 1902, and it has tended to increase until in many cases the whole benefit of the Act has practically disappeared. The evidence shows that the present amount of rates is in many cases sufficient to make impossible successful competition with foreign importations, and, in consequence, there is a general demand for further relief by legislation. In support of this demand it is pointed out that

the interim Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation in 1896 recommended that relief should be given to the extent of three-fourths on agricultural land instead of one-half, as was provided for by the Agricultural Rates Act. In dealing with this demand for further relief we think that the principle to be kept in view is that the contribution from Imperial funds should be the largest amount, and from local rates the smallest, that is compatible with the economic administration of local affairs; and provided such economic administration can be secured, we think that relief should be given to the full extent that was recommended. We are of opinion that in view of the increase of revenue which would follow from the imposition of the duties we suggest, the difficulty of carrying out this recommendation is removed, and some portion of the new revenue might with advantage be devoted to this purpose.

369

Much evidence has been laid before us as to the continual drain from the rural districts into the towns and the consequent scarcity and in numerous cases the deterioration in the skill of the agricultural labourer. As regards the younger men this deterioration in skill is the subject of almost general complaint. The opinion is widely held that increased facilities for acquiring small holdings would do much to check this tendency, and the exceptionally rapid and satisfactory development of market gardening in the Vale of Evesham, Kent, and other districts is quoted in illustration of the influence of small holdings in this direction. In the case of France, where almost the whole of the food supply is derived from home production, there is a vast number of peasant proprietors who are largely engaged in arable cultivation. The French system of land tenure and local government, and the relations between the railways and central and local governing bodies, are absolutely different from those prevailing in the United Kingdom. But there can be no doubt that the rural prosperity of France is largely due to the system of peasant proprietorship. In the United Kingdom, in former times, there were also numerous owners of small properties in all parts of the country ranging by a continuous gradation from a class hardly distinguishable from the small peasant proprietor of France up to the large freeholder. The existence of this class not only added to the stability of the social system, but provided the industrious with opportunities for gradually improving their position. In some parts of England, for example, in the Isle of Axholme and other parts of Lincolnshire, survivals may still be found of these small owners in considerable numbers, while elsewhere the extension of small holdings has led to the revival of a class who are not essentially different from the old yeomanry. In order to secure a still further extension of such small holdings we think that increased facilities should be provided. The proposals made to us vary in character. After considering these proposals we are of opinion that legislation on the lines of a measure now before Parliament, entitled, The Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill * might meet the case in combination with the measures we have suggested dealing with railways, local taxation and fiscal policy. This Bill has already received the approval and support of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to consider how the growth of fruit could best be encouraged in this country.

Land Purchase

370

371

372

The great diversity of soil and the system of farming in the United Kingdom make it impossible to form a satisfactory estimate of the average cost to the farmer of growing wheat and other cereals as separate items of expenditure. The different branches of his business are so dovetailed into one another that calculations of this character can rarely be made. But the evidence on one point we think is clear. Under present conditions it is certain that wheat will go more and more out of cultivation until it is grown merely for the sake of the straw or other incidental advantages in connection with general farming.

Fiscal Measures :
Wheat

* The provisions of the Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill are summarised in the Memorandum by Mr. Green (para. 2035).

Various proposals have been made to us for arresting this decline, and restoring in some degree an industry so important to the country. A bounty upon wheat, it is urged, would secure the desired end without raising prices. In considering this proposal there are two points to be borne in mind; one is the menace to national security from our growing dependence on imported corn and flour; the other is the economic and administrative aspects of the question.

As to the first point, the danger would, we think, be sufficiently met by the adoption of the scheme for the storage of wheat in the United Kingdom, recommended in the minority report of the Royal Commission on Food Supply in Time of War. The necessary outlay for this scheme was shown to be infinitesimal as compared with any bounty that has been suggested, involving as it would the addition of only $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. to the estimates for national defence.

As to the second point, we agree that no real improvement in the agricultural situation can be effected without considerable expenditure, but we may point out that although the decline is most marked in the case of wheat, it extends to nearly every other branch of agriculture, and in these circumstances it would be difficult to resist the claims of these other branches of agriculture for similar treatment. Secondly, if the bounty is so limited it appears to us impossible to arrange any scheme under which the production of wheat would necessarily be extended. We also see the gravest practical difficulties in the way of administering such a bounty. While, therefore, we are heartily in sympathy with the end in view, we are unable to accept the suggestion for a bounty on wheat.

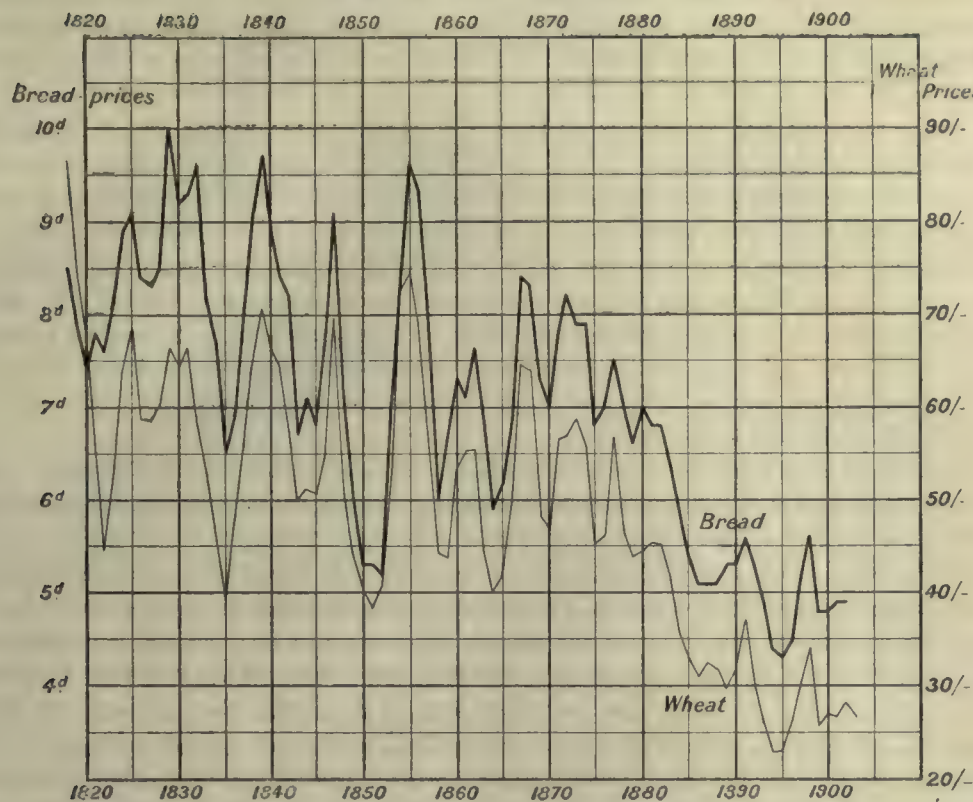
Another proposal made in the evidence is that higher duties than those suggested by Mr. Chamberlain should be imposed. The average price of British wheat for 1906 has been 27s. 9d., and the evidence we have received is to the effect that no considerable extension of wheat growing can take place unless the price is at least 40s. per quarter, and to restore the growth of wheat to anything like its old proportions a rise in price to 50s. per quarter would probably be required. This would mean duties as high as and in most cases higher than those which prevail in the most highly protected foreign countries, and we do not think that the imposition of such high duties is either practicable or desirable in the United Kingdom.

We recommend in the first instance the restoration of the 3d. per cwt. duty (or about 1s. per quarter) imposed on cereals by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach. We propose, however, a preference to the Colonies and recommend that the duty on wheat imports from all foreign countries be 6d. per cwt. (or about 2s. per quarter); we also recommend that there be no rebate on the exportation of offals from imported wheat. The experience of this rebate during the year of its operation showed that considerable quantities of offals were exported to Denmark and other countries, thus benefiting their agriculture at the expense of ours. That no increase in the cost of living would result from such a scale of duties is, we think, shown conclusively by the following diagrams giving the prices of wheat, flour, and bread for the last 80 years. Here it is seen first that although taking the periodical movement of prices the price of bread follows generally the price of wheat, the connection between them is not immediate; the price of bread lags behind the price of wheat and the general tendency is for the price of bread neither to rise nor to fall by so much as the price of wheat.

FIG. 17.—PRICES OF WHEAT AND BREAD, 1818-1904.

Figure 17

377

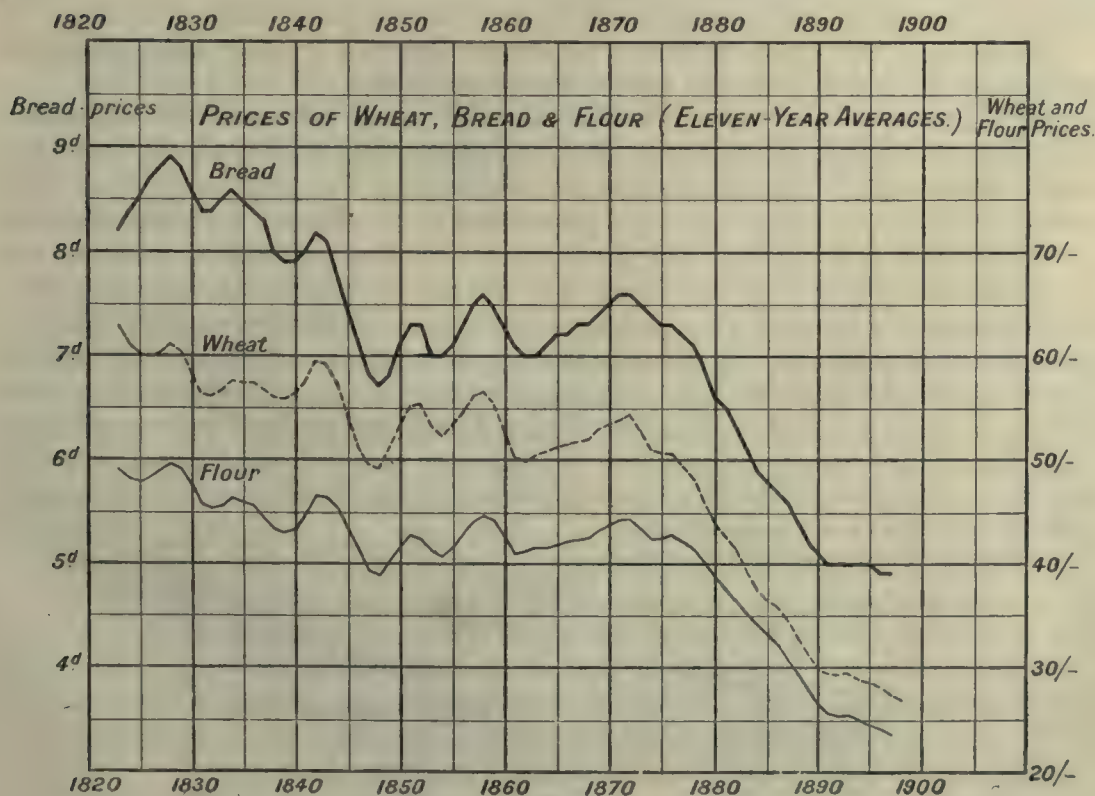


378

FIG. 18.—ELEVEN-YEAR AVERAGE PRICES OF BREAD, WHEAT AND FLOUR.

Figure 18

379



380

The net result of these 80 years of experience shows that under the operation of the duties we suggest, the price of bread could in no conceivable circumstances rise by more than one-sixth of a penny per quartern loaf, and we do not think that in view of the preferential arrangement we propose, and the enormous productive capacity of Canada and other British Colonies and Dependencies, the price of bread would rise at all.

Differentiation between Feeding and Malting Barley

Strong representation has been made to us with regard to the desirability of differentiating between feeding and malting barley. This, however, is a question upon which it scarcely falls within our competence at the present stage to report, as the practicability of such a measure depends upon many technical considerations which would have to be worked out by official experts. A precedent for this differentiation occurs in its adoption in the new German tariff which came into operation on March 1st last, but no information is available showing how the principle is worked. If this differentiation is found to be administratively impossible, the same end should be secured by a readjustment of other taxes. For example, the brewers urge that a duty on barley would put them under an unfair disadvantage, and we think their case should be met by an equivalent reduction on the beer duty. Similarly with regard to hops.

Maize should, we think, be treated on similar lines, as in the case of other cereals, to those adopted by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach when the shilling duty was imposed,* provided that a preference be given to the Colonies by the levying of proportionately higher duties on foreign maize.

Maize

Flour and Offals

Scarcely any proposal has excited greater interest amongst the agricultural classes than that for a duty upon imported flour and meal which shall be slightly higher than the wheat duty. All the witnesses we have examined attach the greatest importance to this proposal and anticipate a great advantage by the cheapening of offals and feeding stuffs. The evidence we have taken show that in regard to milling machinery and the organisation of the milling trade generally, the United Kingdom is not behind any country, but the industry would enormously expand and a great revival would take place were the above-mentioned proposal carried into effect. We recommend, therefore, a duty of 1s. 3d. per cwt. on foreign flour, the duty upon Colonial flour to be substantially lower, the exact rate of duty to be a subject of negotiation with the Colonies, provided that the duty as finally arranged gives an advantage to the milling industry of the United Kingdom.

With regard to meat, including bacon, we propose the levying of import duties, the general level of which should be equivalent to about 5 percent. *ad valorem*.

Animals and Meat

Bacon

The foregoing recommendation differs from the outline scheme submitted by Mr. Chamberlain to the country in one important particular, namely, the proposed imposition of an import duty upon bacon. We have gone at considerable length and in great detail into this question, and we have taken evidence from all the interests affected. The general trend of the evidence is to the effect that even a very moderate duty on pork and bacon would encourage agricultural labourers and other inhabitants of the rural districts to breed and fatten pigs in greater numbers than at present. We are the more disposed to attach full weight to these representations because a policy which had this result could not fail to be of general advantage, especially to the poorer classes who would find a profitable occupation in this branch of agricultural industry, and so add considerably to their earnings. It has further to be considered that the possibility of giving to the Colonies a preference on bacon would be of very great advantage in the arrangement of a preferential scheme, especially with regard to Canada, and the evidence we have examined shows that the arrangement we suggest would not be likely to lead to a rise of prices.

* Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's Tariff was as follows :—

Description.		Pence per cwt
Wheat, barley, oats, rye, buckwheat, peas (not fresh),	beans (not fresh),	
lentils, rice (other than whole and cleaned)	...	3
Maize	...	1½
Offals of the above-mentioned which are feeding-stuffs and do not contain	more than 50 per cent. of starch	1½
Flour, and the meal or milled products of any of the above-mentioned articles,	except offals and maize, milled products	5
Meal or milled products of maize other than offals	...	2½
Starch, arrowroot, cassava powder and tapioca, potato flour, sago, malt, and	pearled barley	5

Representations have been made to us with regard to the free admission of Canadian store cattle, but, in our opinion, the evidence tells most strongly against an alteration of the law requiring slaughter at the ports. The restrictions are based upon the absolute necessity of avoiding all possible risk of the introduction of disease. We recognise the vital importance of the immunity now afforded from the return of pleuro-pneumonia, and we share the view of the great majority of witnesses in thinking that the law must be maintained. We have also taken much evidence as to the desirability of differentiating between live and dead meat, and the considerations which should be kept in view in the actual calculation of the duties. These arguments are so closely bound up with the discussions attendant upon the adoption of a Preferential scheme, especially in regard to Canada, Australia and New Zealand, that we think it would be premature at the present moment to do more than place them upon record.

**Canadian
Store Cattle**

385

**Differentiation
between Live and
Dead Meat**

In no branch of our inquiry have we been more impressed with the success of foreign methods of stimulating exportation than with regard to dairy produce. There can be no doubt that the British producer is under serious disability as compared with his foreign competitors who have all the advantages of State encouragement, preferential railway rates and other methods of aiding exportation. The evidence shows that under conditions of fair competition, the output of British dairy produce might be greatly increased, making the country far more self-sufficient in that respect than it now is. As a means of equalising the position of the British and foreign producers, we recommend that specific duties of from 5 to 10 per cent. be imposed upon dairy produce imported from foreign countries. In the term "dairy produce" we include butter, cheese, poultry and eggs.

Dairy Produce

386

Similar arguments apply to market gardening products. In this branch of agriculture the British producer has shown great enterprise and energy, but, notwithstanding, the industry has not progressed in any way commensurate with the demand and as might have been expected from the greater contiguity of the British producer to his markets. Experience shows that during its earlier years the industry developed most rapidly, but since foreign importations have begun to increase on a large scale, this progress has been checked and there is no evidence that the consumer has benefited from this encouragement of foreign rather than of home produce. We recommend that in the case of market gardening produce, the general level of duties upon importations from foreign countries should also be from 5 to 10 per cent., and in the term "market gardening produce" we include asparagus, tomatoes, fruit, vegetables, &c.

Market Gardening

387

The evidence in regard to potatoes shows clearly the favoured position of the Continental grower in meeting the great natural increase in the British demand. In addition to the advantages which Continental producers generally have over the British farmer, the potato-growers of Germany, Holland and France have local industries into which potatoes enter as raw material such as the farina and starch industries. Moreover, Continental revenue systems, unlike the British system, give facilities for the manufacture of potato-spirit, a commodity which is rapidly increasing in demand. Thus in Germany alone, the potato area is seven times as large as that of the whole of the United Kingdom, and the German produce has increased by about 1,000,000 tons in ten years, whereas the British produce has remained practically stagnant. This German development, as contrasted with British stagnation, is held to be in a large measure dependent upon the facility with which German potatoes can enter British markets, and we think that a moderate duty would, in conjunction with the other measures recommended in this Report, enable the British farmer to secure a large part of the increased demand consequent upon general industrial development.

Potatoes

388

The British area under hops shows a serious decline. This decline appears to be due in the main to the unfair conditions of competition with the foreign importer, especially the facilities for dumping foreign hops upon the British market. The evidence points conclusively to the fact that an equalisation of the conditions of competition would lead to a great expansion of the hop industry with considerable benefit to labour, and we think that a specific duty should be imposed, large enough to check the unfair foreign competition to which the British producer is now exposed.

Preference

We recognise that the United Kingdom will probably depend more or less upon imported food supplies, and that any material improvement of agriculture can be the outcome only of an expansion in the home demand. In these circumstances British agriculture has much to gain from the extended Colonial market for British manufactures which would result from a system of reciprocal preference and the consequently increased demand for food produce in the British industrial centres. In the case of all the proposed duties on agricultural produce we recommend that a substantial preference should be given to the British Colonies, thus opening up a wide area for negotiation. The exact amount of the preferences, on all articles except wheat must obviously depend upon the value of the return preferences which the Colonies are willing to grant, and are therefore matters for negotiation with them. We have recommended a registration duty on Colonial as well as foreign wheat, because by this method a large permanent revenue is guaranteed, and, as we have already indicated under the head of "Local Taxation," we think that the increase of revenue from the duties proposed would remove most of the difficulties in the way of adopting the non-fiscal measures of agricultural reform which we recommend.

We desire in conclusion to express our appreciation of the ability and indefatigable energy of Mr. Hewins, the Secretary of the Tariff Commission and the Staff, to whom the Agricultural Committee is so greatly indebted in the compilation of this Report.

Signatures of
Committee

(Signed)

HENRY CHAPLIN (*Chairman*).

J. RICHARD BARTER.

P. BLUNDELL

THOMAS BROWN.

W. COOPER.

JOHN W. DENNIS.

DESBOROUGH.

W. FRANKISH.

J. M. FRASER.

WM. J. GOULDING.

P. R. GRAY.

JOHN M. HARRIS.

R. W. HUDSON.

GEO. MALCOLM.

A. H. H. MATTHEWS.

F. NEAME.

ROUSE ORLEBAR.

CECIL PARKER.

C. J. PHILLIPS.

OWEN PRICE.

J. STRATTON.

The death of Mr. James Biggar deprived the Committee of his valued services during the later stages of the inquiry.

Mr. C. D. Wise has since his appointment to the Committee accepted a position in South Africa.

The following provisional scale of duties is inserted on the same principle as the provisional scheme recommended in the Iron and Steel and other Reports of the Tariff Commission, that is, as an "indication of the nature of the scheme which may hereafter be recommended" when the inquiry into other trades and interests has been completed and the Final Report of the Commission has been prepared.

PROVISIONAL SCALE OF DUTIES.*

General Tariff.

Preferential Tariff.

Wheat	{ 6d. per cwt. (or about 2s. per quarter).	3d. per cwt. (or about 1s. per quarter).
Barley, Oats, Rye, Maize, &c. ...	{ Duties equivalent to those on Wheat	Duties equivalent to those on Wheat
Wheaten and other flour and Meal	{ 1s. 3d. per cwt.	
Animals and Meat, including Bacon	{ General level to be 5%	
Dairy produce, including Poultry and Eggs	{ Specific duties equivalent in general to from 5% to 10% <i>ad</i> <i>val</i> : though in particular cases some duties when calculated may be found to be lower and in others rather higher than these limits.	{ Subject to negotiation with the Colonies.
Market garden produce, including Potatoes and Hops		
Hay and Straw		

* The subject of agricultural machinery will be dealt with in the Report on the Engineering Industry and in the Final Report. In regard to feeding stuffs and fertilisers, the general rule would be that they should be imported free; but the subject belongs in the main to the Chemical Industry and will be dealt with in the Report on that Industry and in the Final Report.

APPENDIX.

SECTION II.—DRAFT QUESTIONS TO WITNESSES.

AGRICULTURISTS GENERALLY.

I.—District and Branch of Agriculture represented.

1. Name and address.
2. On what branch or branches of agriculture can you give evidence to the Committee?
3. What acreage do you farm in all, and in each description of farming?

II.—State of Agriculture in Witness's District.

4. State briefly your experience in recent years in each of the branches in which you are concerned.
5. Have any of these branches become more or less remunerative in recent years? If so, state which and to what extent.
6. Have profits in your district increased or diminished in recent years in proportion to the acreage farmed? Give such details as you can, and specific illustrations.
7. Have you had any difficulties with regard to the quality and supply of labour in your district, and have there been any changes in these respects in recent years?
8. Has the rate of wages of the labourers in your district changed in recent years?

III.—Causes of Change.

9. To what causes do you attribute the change, if any, in the condition of agriculture in your district? If more than one, give your answers, if possible, under the following separate heads:—(a) Time when this change began; (b) effect of fall in prices; (c) labour difficulties; (d) railway rates at home and abroad.
10. Can you state whether there have been any recent changes in your district with regard to (a) market organisation; (b) means of carriage by rail, canal, or otherwise; (c) development of co-operative buying and selling; (d) agricultural education; (e) building of cottages.

IV.—Methods of Cultivation as compared with Foreign Countries.

11. Have you any information showing whether foreign countries have advantages over British farmers in respect to methods of cultivation? Give particulars.
12. Have you any information showing whether local rates and taxes in your district have become more or less burdensome in recent years?

V.—Proportion of different Items of Expenditure.

13. What is your estimate for the annual outgoings *per acre* on your farm under each of the following heads:—(a) rent; (b) labour; (c) feeding stuffs; (d) manure; (e) machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts; (f) rates and taxes.

VI.—Suggested Duties.

14. Taking Mr. Chamberlain's proposals as a basis, what advantage, if any, do you anticipate will follow their being put into force?
15. What share of advantage do you think will accrue to the labourer?
16. So far as you can judge, would preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies require you to make any changes in the character of your farming (*i.e.*, from crops cultivation, to stock raising, or otherwise)?

HOP GROWERS.

I.—

1. Name and address.
2. What statute acreage do you cultivate in all? Specify the number of acres under hops and other crops.

II.—State of Hop-growing in Witness's District.

3. State briefly your experience in recent years in regard to hop-growing.
4. Has hop-growing become more or less remunerative in recent years? If so, to what extent?
5. Have profits in your district increased or diminished in recent years in proportion to the acreage cultivated? Give such details as you can, and specific illustrations.
6. Have you had any difficulties with regard to the quality and supply of labour in your district, including hop-pickers; and have there been any changes in these respects in recent years?
7. Has the rate of wages of labourers in your district changed in recent years?

III.—Causes of Change.

8. To what causes do you attribute the change, if any, in the acreage of hop-growing in your district? If more than one, give your answers, if possible, under the following separate heads:—(a) Time when this change began; (b) labour difficulties; (c) railway rates at home and abroad; (d) other causes.
9. Can you state whether there have been any recent changes in your district with regard to (a) market organisation; (b) means of carriage by rail, canal, or otherwise; (c) development of co-operative buying and selling; (d) agricultural education; (e) building of cottages.

IV.—Methods of Cultivation as compared with Foreign Countries.

10. Have you any information showing whether growers in foreign countries have advantages over British growers in respect to methods and cost of cultivation ?

11. Have you any information showing whether local rates and taxes in your district have become more or less burdensome in recent years ?

V.—

12. What capital is employed in the production and curing of hops, *per acre* ? (a) By the landlord ; (b) by the tenant.

VI.—Proportion of different Items of Expenditure.

13. What is your estimate for the annual outgoings *per acre* on your farm under each of the following heads :—(a) Rent and interest on necessary buildings ; (b) labour ; (c) manure ; (d) machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts, including hop poles and wire work ; (e) rates and taxes ; (f) other outgoings.

VII.—Suggested Duties.

14. What duties, if any, upon imported hops do you suggest ? What advantage, if any, do you anticipate would follow such duties being put into force ?

15. What share of advantage do you think would accrue to the labourer ?

16. So far as you can judge, would a preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies require you to make any changes in the character of your industry ?

17. What are the probabilities of expansion in British hop-growing under favourable conditions ?

18. What is the probable additional amount of labour which would be employed under these conditions ?

FRUIT GROWERS AND MARKET GARDENERS.

I.—District and Branch represented.

1. Name and address.

2. On what branch or branches of fruit culture or market gardening can you give evidence to the Committee ?

3. What is the acreage of your occupation, and how long have you held it ?

4. Do you cultivate soft fruits, plums, apples and pears, tomatoes, under glass, vegetables ? Do you grow for market, jam making or cider ; and what have been the principal items of your produce during recent years ?

II.—State of Fruit Culture and Market Gardening in Witness's District.

5. Has the acreage under fruit and vegetable cultivation decreased or increased during recent years ? And if there has been any change in the character of your cultivation, what is the nature of the change and what was the reason for making it ?

6. Do imported fruit or vegetables injure your market ? Does pulp for jam injure your market ?

7. How is your principal produce disposed of ?

8. Have profits in your district increased or diminished in recent years in proportion to the acreage cultivated ? Give such details as you can, and specific illustrations.

9. Have you had any difficulties with regard to the quality and supply of labour in your district, and have there been any changes in these respects in recent years ?

10. Has the rate of wages of the labourers in your district changed in recent years ?

III.—Causes of Change.

11. To what causes do you attribute the change, if any, in the condition of fruit culture and market gardening in your district ? If more than one, give your answers, if possible, under the following separate heads :—(a) Time when this change began ; (b) effect of fall in prices ; (c) labour difficulties ; (d) railway rates at home and abroad.

12. Can you state whether there have been any recent changes in your district with regard to :—(a) Market organisation ; (b) means of carriage by rail, canal, or otherwise ; (c) agricultural education ; (d) building of cottages ?

13. Has any progress been made in your district in the adoption of co-operative methods in regard to the purchase of materials and the marketing of produce ? Please give any details you can.

IV.—Methods of Cultivation as compared with Foreign Countries.

14. Have you any information showing whether foreign countries have advantages over British growers in respect to methods of cultivation ? Give particulars.

15. Have you any information showing whether local rates and taxes in your district have become more or less burdensome in recent years ?

V.—Proportion of Different Items of Expenditure.

16. What is your estimate for the annual outgoings *per acre* on your farm under each of the following heads:—(a) Rent; (b) labour; (c) manure; (d) machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts; (e) rates and taxes.

VI.—Suggested Duties.

17. Taking Mr. Chamberlain's proposals as a basis, what advantage, if any, do you anticipate will follow their being put into force?

18. What share of advantage do you think will accrue to the labourer?

19. So far as you can judge, would preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies require you to make any changes in the character of your industry?

20. What are the probabilities of expansion in British fruit culture and market gardening under favourable conditions?

21. What is the probable additional amount of labour which would be employed under these conditions?

BACON CURERS.

I.—District and Branch of Trade represented.

1. What is the name and address of the firm with which you are connected?

2. On what branch, or branches, of the industry can you give evidence to the Committee?

3. Do you trade in imported hog products as well as English or Irish?

II.—State of Trade in Witness's District.

4. Have you any information respecting the fluctuations, if any have occurred, of business done by your trade in your district:—(a) In the United Kingdom; and with (b) foreign countries; (c) the Colonies; (d) British possessions.

5. To what extent has your trade been affected by imports into the United Kingdom?

6. Can you inform the Committee whether total net profits in your trade in your district have increased or diminished in recent years in relation to turnover? Please give any details you may have and specific illustrations.

7. Have any special branches of your trade become more or less remunerative in recent years? If so, which and to what extent?

8. Has the trade in such branches increased in volume? The Committee will be glad to have any details.

9. What has been your experience regarding the amount and continuity of employment in your trade and district in recent years?

10. Has the rate of earnings of workpeople in your district and trade increased, or diminished, or altered in any way in recent years? Kindly give details.

III.—Causes of Improvement or Deterioration.

11. To what causes do you attribute the change, if any, in the state of trade in your district?

12. Is it reasonable to expect that any causes of deterioration can be removed by:—(a) Improvements in market organisation; (b) improvements in means of transport; (c) development of Imperial sources of supply?

IV.—Foreign Railway Rates and Organisation of Transport by Land and Water.

13. Have you any information bearing upon the relation between railway and canal rates in this and other countries?

14. Does your trade suffer in any way from the preferential railway rates adopted in foreign countries?

15. Do transport rates by land and water bear more heavily on your business than upon that of your competitors in other countries?

V.—Processes used as compared with competing Countries.

16. Have competing countries any advantage in respect of processes of manufacture, and, if so, what?

VI.—Relative Conditions of Different Branches of the Trade.

17. Have you any information upon the relative conditions of the different branches of the trade? Please give any details you can and explanations of causes.

VII.—British and Foreign Methods of Finance and Accounting.

18. Have you any information upon the different methods adopted in this country and in the United States for the raising of capital?

19. Have you any information enabling you to compare the burden of administration charges, such as rents, commissions, salaries, &c., in this country, with other countries?

20. Have you any information bearing on the question of the incidence of local rates in its relation to prime cost in this and other countries now and in former years?

21. Do you consider that the systems of checking used in the shops and the general methods of accounting by means of which prime cost is arrived at are, in foreign countries, superior to those adopted here? If so, why?

VIII.—Importance of Technical and Commercial Training and Higher Education of all Grades.

22. Do you consider that, on the whole, the systems of technical and commercial training and higher education generally promote the production of a superior class of workman in foreign countries?

IX.—Causes of Amalgamation.

23. Have you any information bearing upon the causes which have led to the amalgamations of large concerns in this and in other countries?

X.—Proportion of Different Elements of Cost.

24. Can you give any information as to the proportion of the different elements of cost in your business—that is to say, the percentage of the total value of your output which is spent in:—(a) Labour: (b) materials, including hogs; (c) fixed charges?

25. Can you say how these figures compare with foreign and Colonial experience?

XI.—Experience of Different Forms of Foreign Competition.

26. What facilities are enjoyed by foreign competitors arising from the effect of trusts, kartells, &c., or bounties (in regard to "dumping," &c.)?

27. Is their system of commercial travelling superior, and, if so, in what respects? (See Consular Reports.)

XII.—Effect of Foreign and Colonial Tariffs.

28. The Committee will be glad of information as to the effect of foreign and Colonial tariffs in restricting British trade, with illustrations.

29. How far do foreign and Colonial tariffs tend to the efficiency of production in competing countries by securing the home market?

30. How far does the British policy of free imports assist competing countries in securing a position either in the British home market or in neutral markets?

XIII.—Suggested Duties.

31. What are your views as to import duties on pork, bacon, and maize respectively?

32. If duties were imposed, what, in your opinion, would be the effect:—(a) Upon prices in the home markets; (b) in securing greater continuity and security in the home trade; (c) in promoting economies of production; (d) in developing the British industry of rearing and fattening pigs; (e) in increasing employment?

33. What would be the effect upon imports and upon your trade if fresh pork were taxed and bacon admitted free?

34. What are your views of the suggestion that bacon should be admitted free of duty (because it is the "staple food of many of the poorer classes"), even if other meats were taxed?

35. What are your views as to the suitability of maize and barley meal respectively as foods for hog raising?

36. What would be the effect upon the standard quality of English pigs if maize were admitted free and barley taxed?

37. Can you give information as to the possibilities of Colonial supplies of bacon and hams under a system of preference?

38. It has been suggested that fraudulent trading is very prevalent in the bacon trade. The Committee will be glad of your views and any information.

39. What is the present approximate difference between the prices (for merchants), delivered London, of:—(a) Danish and Canadian; (b) Danish and English (or Irish)?

SECTION III.—EVIDENCE OF AGRICULTURAL WITNESSES.

The following is a full summary of the evidence of agricultural witnesses as revised by them. The only omissions are portions of evidence which witnesses desired to be treated as confidential.

The evidence is grouped under General Headings (*See contents*). For specific references the index should be consulted.

WITNESS No. 98.

MR. CHARLES THOMAS ADAMS

(Farmer and Auctioneer, Wendover, Buckinghamshire).

I farmed 700 acres for 17 years, but have given up a part. One farm was 12 miles from Wendover, another was all grass, and where I live is all arable.

Of the last 7 or 8 years, 4 have been very bad indeed for grass-land farmers. The last 2 have been much better for the production of milk, etc. Keep has been abundant and the flow of milk large. I feed a good deal of mutton and pork and put out 10 to 20 barren cows every year. I feed them well and milk them fat as an outlet for otherwise rather unsaleable stock. The weather of the last two seasons and the consequent badly-got crops have been serious. My books show 3 seasons' expenses and the produce of 2. This apart, I prefer mixed farming. Low prices account for absence of profit, for now, instead of short crops raising prices the foreigner comes in with better stuff from a better climate to supply the deficiency and undersells us. I follow the four-course system as nearly as I can apply it. In some seasons we miss our clover and grass plants, and are obliged to have more wheat for the succeeding years. On some of my very good wheat land I have grown as much as 6 quarters to the acre, but very seldom, the average is about 4; I sell my straw well, otherwise there would be no profit. This does not penalise the next crop, because I buy malt combs, pig food, etc., to the extent of about £300 a year, besides what I consume off my own farm. The loss in straw is put back and set off against feeding stuffs and manure bought; I seldom send a lean animal off my place. The manurial value of straw is so much below the price, that the money is better spent in artificial manures or feeding stuffs, and no farmer would ever bind himself to use his straw on the place, unless so far from a railway that he could not possibly sell it. There is an indirect advantage in exchanging straw for feeding stuffs and getting a profit on that in the fat stock sold. A crop of wheat at present prices, taking the country through, does not pay. I am close to a railway station and have many private customers for my straw; every farmer has not that advantage. If I could make more profit I should grow many things I dare not touch now, e.g., potatoes and carrots, etc., but labour at present is prohibitive. There has been very little change in the methods of cropping during the last 15 or 20 years, because the land will not admit of it. In many places a large proportion of each farm has been put down to grass, but not with us, because our land will not go down to grass at all. We only use rotation grasses.

Where there is much arable, extra hands are often required for a week or two at a time, and since the railway was built they have been very difficult to get. I have trained some 50 young men to farm work, and have only 4 left now. The towns attract them; there is more society and amusement; it cannot be the wages, for 25s. in London is nothing near the equivalent of 18s. in the country, and, if we could afford to pay this wage, 80 % would stay. As it is, if they fall ill and come back to the country to be nursed they have not a shilling in their pockets, and their parents have to keep them. Much work goes undone for want of means to pay labour.

Our standing wage for cattlemen is 16s., or with perquisites 18s. I give them 10s. to 12s. 6d. for hay work extra, besides beer, and £2 for harvest, and if the harvest extends beyond 4 weeks I put the same ratio on the following week, so that they get about £3 extra. I give carting money, to get rid of the nuisance of beer drawing when carting produce to mills or railway stations. It amounts to quite £3 a year extra.

Cottage accommodation is short in the town of Wendover, but in the country round there is plenty, though very third-rate. The labourers very much appreciate a nice home, and such would be a very strong inducement to make them stay on the land or come back to it. Grouping houses together is a mistake, they ought to be more apart with a garden to each.

Country boys kept at school until they are 14 years of age are only fit for clerks. I could have 1,000 applications for a clerkship at £1 a week and not more than 3 or 4 as shepherds or ploughmen. Lads do not seem to care about coming on the land at 14. Discretionary powers should be given to school-masters to select the boys to go on to 14; those who would make good ploughmen or agricultural labourers are often not adapted to the high standards now imposed; it is a cruel hardship to the parents as well as a serious inconvenience to the farmers. The lads should be allowed some weeks away from school in busy times; they could earn money and the work would give them a knowledge of farm life, the most important item in the education of country lads. The land ought to be absolutely free of the cost of education altogether, and indeed should be relieved of all its burdens. So important is the production of food to this country that nothing should be withheld that will encourage the food-producing classes.

Railway rates are very excessive when set against the value of the stuff sent, especially at present prices. The Grand Junction Canal Company closed a canal that used to be a great benefit to the place. An action was instituted to make them open it again, but evidence was brought that the cost of repair would be great. The case went against us, and the canal is practically closed for traffic. The waterways of the country should be opened up for free navigation. I have now a customer who would take a lot of my stuff by boat, but cannot take it on rail. That means sending it $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 miles to Aylesbury, or 7 to Tring. The carting just spoils my market there. That canal being shut is a great drawback to the neighbourhood.

Rates are growing rapidly, especially in Wendover. A sewage scheme was forced on us which was to cost £1,400; it has gone to £4,000 and the end is not yet. We contribute to the rates of the council of Wendover, though not in full, but it affects me greatly. County rates are also increasing. The highway rate should be a

State of
Agriculture.

494

Labour.

495

Wages.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Education.

496

Railway Rates.
Canals.

Local Rates.

497 Local Rates
—continued.

Co-operation.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

Duties.

Effect on Offals.

498 Effect on Labour.

Bounty.

county or Imperial fund, each parish dealing with its own roads and charging the county. Owing to the fact of the urban roads being grouped with the rural the waste of labour and material is enormous, and the incidence of the rate unfair.

The cottagers co-operate as to pig-killing. As a rule they kill in turn, beginning early in the season. The neighbours all round take part of the pig, and the next neighbour kills another one; so they get rid of them all. They prefer bacon and pork to anything else, and it is a cheaper food than foreign mutton.

I had the benefit of the Agricultural Rates Act as a tenant farmer, and only know one instance of the landlord taking improper advantage of it. I certainly desire its renewal.

A small tax on everything would increase the demand for labour, etc., and afford some guarantee that prices would never quite drop to the present level. Colonial grain should not be exempt altogether. Let the Colonial grower have a preference, but it is not fair to put him on the same footing as the British, because he does not pay our heavy rates and taxes. The Argentine, Russian, or American exporter would pay the tax undoubtedly, as he has no other market for his surplus. It would not increase the price of grain, and, therefore, would not increase the price of flour, or of bread, so much as it would steady the market. With a very heavy duty on flour, and wheat free, the grain would be milled in this country to our great advantage in cheap offals, instead of the present ridiculous prices. Now the Americans keep back all offals to feed cheap pork and flood our markets with it. The duty on flour would enable our labourers to produce their own pork at 1½d. to 2d. a lb. or even less. Quite apart from the cheap offals, a share of the farmer's extra profits would certainly go to the labourers in increased wages. The farmers would be glad to pay skilled men if farming were profitable. There ought to be a bounty on wheat, by the quarter, not by the acre; 5s. a quarter would be enough; that would be £100 a year to me, and would be a great help. The farmer would obtain a greater benefit from a bounty than he would by the same amount devoted to the reduction of local rates, because he would get the bounty directly, and the relief from taxation indirectly. The country could grow enough to tide us over 12 months, but the farmers' rickyards must be the granaries, not brick and slate ones. It would not take a long time to bring the good, abandoned corn-land back into cultivation, if there was a guarantee that it would pay and that the capital invested in the industry would be in some way secured.

WITNESS No. 99.

MR. P. F. ASTILL

(Farmer, Cossington, Leicestershire, representing the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture).

I farm 450 acres—250 pasture and 200 arable—at Cossington, Leicestershire. My farm has been in the family about 80 years. I, myself, have been farming nearly 20 years in Leicestershire.

499 State of
Agriculture.

I do not think there has been much alteration in the condition of agriculture during the last 7 or 8 years. There was a great alteration 25 years ago. Much of the poorer land has gone out of cultivation—gone down into very bad pasturage. The change for the worse began in 1880 and the profits on the whole have been steadily diminishing, especially in the last two years, which have been very disastrous in each branch of my farming. I attribute that principally to the fall in prices and foreign competition, and increasing price of labour, which has always been on the rise, and we are not getting a corresponding price for what we produce. I have only known one instance where there has been a fall in wages, and it was only for a very short time. The ordinary wage is now 18s. per week, an increase of 3s. since I started farming.

Wages.

Supply of
Labour.

We had very serious difficulties in obtaining labour a few years ago, but for the last 2 years there has been plenty. We have many large granite and brick works round us, which have taken many of the agricultural labourers of recent years. These works are now very slack, and many men would be very pleased to get back to the land. These works are, perhaps, the chief competitors with the farmer for the labour, and in consequence of their slackness much more labour has been available, a great many people being out of employment. Bad building trade is the cause of the slackness in the brick works. The granite is practically all for road-making, and the output does not fluctuate much; but still the quarries are a great competitor for the labour. When labourers come back to the land I find them good men again. If a man has had no previous experience of farm labour he is very little use to us. A farm labourer requires as much educating as an ordinary mechanic; but if you have had him from 15 to 20 he will always remain a farm labourer.

500 Cottage
Accommodation.
Local Rates.

We have quite sufficient cottage accommodation in our neighbourhood.

The rates are very rapidly going up. They have gone up from 2s. 3d. to 2s. 8d. and 3s. 5d. per acre in the last three completed years. This is due to a very expensive sewage scheme in Sileby, and I believe, the Education Act has sent up the rates 6d. The whole rate to-day is about 6s. I have land in two villages, and the rates in the £ are very different in the two parishes.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

Under the Agricultural Holdings Act I think the tenants had the whole gain. That amounted in my case to not quite half the rates. I got all the advantages of the effect of the Act. I am quite confident that my landlord did not share them. That is the case in my district without exception. In fact, I have never heard of a landlord making any difference. Perhaps when a farm changes hands it may make a difference, but certainly not before.

Outgoings.

My average rent is 33s., the average labour, including both arable and pasture, costs 23s., feeding stuffs 13s., manure 4s. 6d., machinery 3s., and rates and taxes 3s. 5d. per acre. Mine is a fairly good farm. I have got more than half of it in grass, but still I am giving you the figures for the whole.

Labour Cost on
Arable and Pasture
Lands.

The cost of labour on well-managed arable land in my district, paid directly to the labourer, is £2 per acre. On grass it seldom reaches 10s. The 10s. is very little increased by labour charges included in bills paid to tradesmen, or for the purchase of implements, and on the other hand, the £2 is increased 50 or 60 per cent. by the numerous charges coming against the arable land in the upkeep and the purchase of implements. The employment of more labour causes a much greater dispersion of money in the district, and the opposite

holds good when land is put down to grass and the labour is curtailed. In other words there is £2 an acre difference between the wages on the one and the other. I pay £2 on my arable land and 10s. on my pasture, and then there is the difference of the indirect labour.

We have very carefully considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals and how they would affect us. We have always looked at this subject from the different policies that we have before us. Our feeling is that Mr. Balfour's policy would increase the cost of everything we have to buy without giving a corresponding increase in what we have to sell. Consequently we do not feel, as farmers, that we can support it. On the other hand Mr. Chamberlain's suggested duties would at the least prevent us from being worse off, though I do not think we should feel a very great benefit. The Chamber was practically unanimous in that view. Their view is that the suggested duties would have to be levied on all imported agricultural produce and double on foreign produce to give the farmer much help. That is, instead of giving the Colonies a preference by exempting them from all duties, the duties on the foreigner should be increased, and the Colonies should bear a lesser proportion. We have considered how much the duties ought to be increased, and the view of the Chamber is that the suggested duties of 2s. are not more than the ordinary farmer pays in local taxation, and they feel that everyone who has the advantage of supplying the English market should pay an equal amount of taxation one way or another. We pay in local burdens, and they would pay by a duty; all people who sell in our market, living beyond the country, should pay something for the use of that market.

We are unanimous that flour should carry a much heavier duty than wheat.

If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were carried out in their present form, we anticipate some benefit directly and should get indirect benefit by an improvement of trade in the country.

The farmer could not give increased wages to the labourer until he himself received some advantage, but if farming became more remunerative, the labourer would get fuller work and the ultimate advantage would be sufficient to enable the farmer to make a small increase in wages. I think Mr. Chamberlain's policy on the whole would so benefit the trade of the country, that the agricultural labourer would get more money independent of whether the farmer was prospering more or less. He would be recompensed in that way. The agricultural labourer is in competition with the town labourer. We have to pay indirectly on the same scale as the town labourer is paid. From an improved position of the manufacturing industries there would be a greater demand for labour in the towns, and quite apart from the effect of the duties on the farmer this would tend to raise wages.

The tendency of these new duties would be to put a check upon the laying down to grass of arable land. This would be a great help to the agricultural labourer and a great national gain. I should like to draw your attention to the great loss to the country where arable land is laid down to pasture. An ordinary arable field if it is to be remunerative to the farmer on a very low estimate must be made to produce £4 a year, not taking rent into consideration. If it ceases to produce £4 a year it naturally goes down to bad pasturage, when it is only necessary for the farmer to produce a few shillings an acre to prevent his having a loss on the field, and I take it that the nation loses the difference. I am firmly convinced in my own mind that the nation loses annually £4 an acre on all land that goes down to pasture.

I do not think the imposition of 2s. a quarter would produce a greater change, or greater fluctuation in prices than the ordinary fluctuations from month to month. It would not raise the price beyond the ordinary fluctuations.

Personally I do not agree with maize being exempted. I look upon maize as the greatest competitor with all the second grade cereals that the English farmer produces, and a duty on maize would not affect the poor man at all. It is not much used for the feeding of pigs, but more for poultry. In feeding cattle we use maize as a mixture, but never by itself. I use more cakes than anything.

WITNESS No. 100.

MR. W. F. BELL

(Farmer, Luthriebank, Fifeshire, and Claverhouse, Forfarshire).

I am well acquainted with farming on the east coast of Scotland, and in Fifeshire and Forfarshire in particular, and have experience in arable farming, including all varieties of grain-growing, potatoes, turnips, grazing and dairying, though I am really not a dairyman. I sell the produce of two farms near Dundee to dairymen to be put into milk. I farm 800 acres of my own and 1,200 acres of rented land. I farm in a seven shift; 200 acres potatoes, 200 turnips, 200 wheat, 300 oats, 100 barley and 1,000 grass. All this arable land lies two years in grass in rotation.

The American duty of £2 per ton is a serious handicap; but for this and despite the extraordinary American crop, Scotch potatoes would leave me £2 per ton from New York now. Ten years ago this duty was only £1, and I used to send regularly at a profit. Now the money has to be sent first, as payment of duty on the other side is not allowed; bad or good, all that are landed have to pay. This duty helps the American agriculturist by relief of taxation. Continental competition is also very serious especially when their crops are heavy. This year (1904) the Scotch crop is extraordinary. To send my present crop to America would cost £5,000 or £25 per acre in duty alone. But for this duty we should risk growing many thousand more acres of potatoes. If the English crop had been equal to our own this year I should have had 2,500 tons thrown on my hands for cattle feeding; the present price at least pays expenses.

The case for the admission of Canadian cattle is simple. We have to meet the manufactured article, the beef, in our home market and are at the same time denied access to the same raw material as our competitors. Make this country, where the meat is consumed, the place of feeding and agriculture will be helped all round, and the land improved. To keep breeding stock exclusively, or almost exclusively, is to starve the land and drive the people off it. All land in Great Britain capable of ripening oats in an ordinary season would benefit largely by feeding cattle and sheep upon it and would maintain a larger population. I have a farm at Hatton-

505 Canadian
Stores.
—continued.

mill of 560 acres, and each year I feed 250 cattle there. I estimate my loss there at £2 a head, or £500 sterling. But if I put a breeding stock in place of a feeding one on this farm, I estimate my loss at 2 qrs. per acre of grain, that is 450 qrs. on 225 acres at 25s. per qr., or £562 10s.; 75 acres of potatoes at 3 tons per acre less (225 tons) at £2 per ton, making £450; 75 acres of turnips at 5 tons per acre less (375 tons) at 10s. per ton, £187 15s.; 150 acres grass at £1 less, £150; in all £1,850 5s. per annum. I do not mean to say I am losing £1,850 5s. a year on it for want of Canadian cattle at the present moment, because I would never dream of putting breeding stock on that class of land. I am fighting as hard as I can under existing circumstances and buying Irish and feeding. I do not breed at all. But there certainly is a loss of something like £500 a year from the few years when we got Canadian stores free into our district and had the handling of them. Another farm near Cupar, Fife, consists of 400 acres which 20 years ago was let on lease and £1,250 per annum rent was paid for 19 years. There were employed upon it at that time 10 married men and 7 pairs of horses, and a population of quite 50 persons got their livelihood about the place. It was all in permanent grass when I became the owner and I only keep a shepherd in winter and two in summer; in all a population of 3 instead of 50. That land is of the best quality, in a first-rate climate and within 2 miles of a station on main line of railway.

Potato growing employs a large amount of labour, and if we are to pay higher wages and increase our expenses we shall need some safety valve, and this we should have in the re-admission of Canadian store cattle, and free entry for our potatoes into America. The class of farms last referred to would at once go under cultivation and the people would return to the land.

506

Within a radius of 3 miles, 4 other first-class farms have in the last 10 years all gone down to grass, and 150 people have been driven off some of the best arable land in Scotland, averaging £3 per acre rent when last let. It is only the very best land which will keep in grass. The sheep might be put back on land above the height of ripening oats. This land in Fife is too good for sheep, though it is paying well under them along with cattle. I cannot work it any other way. I only went into sheep after the Canadian store trade was stopped. But those sheep should go back to the higher land to which they properly belong. This land, at 3% on the price I paid for it, would be rented at 28s. per acre, it will never be ploughed in my lifetime again unless we get our store cattle trade on another footing.

It is a question whether the abolition of the duty on potatoes to America or the re-admission of the Canadian cattle would be the more important to me. I would like them both. I am not at all sure that the admission of Canadian stores would affect the price of others, but the price of beef would rise, because the quality, fed in this country, is infinitely better than that slaughtered under present regulations. Our experience of Canadian stores was that they fed exceptionally quickly, and paid very well. Those in Scotland who are against them can never have owned one. They are much healthier and stronger than the Irish cattle and have the knack of growing straight away from the day when we get them, while the Irish cattle are 2 or 3 months before they seem to fit into our colder climate in Scotland. English stores seldom come to our country. Reckoned at per cwt. there was not much difference between Canadian and Irish cattle on their arrival.

507

Canadian beef coming in as stores at 4d. per lb. would not reduce the price of store stock permanently, for the whole of it would be made worth 6d., and the price of home stores is ruled by the price of beef. The improvement of the land and the employment of more labour are matters of prime importance. The advantage of feeding cattle here in place of rearing them is extraordinary, though we must not on that account abandon breeding. Some land is suited to breeding and feeding at the same time, but to breed stores and sell them to one's neighbour to fatten is simply enriching his land and his pocket and impoverishing your own.

Disease.

I have no apprehension as to disease. I happened to have some cattle out of the same cargo as that from which the celebrated cow was condemned. That there was lung disease in that cargo is certain, but not pleuro-pneumonia. It is a serious matter to run the risk of getting pleuro-pneumonia back again, and if I thought that Canadian cattle would bring it I should not ask for their readmission. It is more or less true that many are only American cattle moved across the frontier, and we should seek to admit Canadian cattle only, but it should be left to Canada, who will benefit by the trade, to see that infected American cattle do not come in.

Dairying.

Dairying is very heavily hit also. When Canadian cattle came in free, our local dairymen got supplies of them in place of Irish cows, and they were far and away the healthiest cows they ever got. There is a most serious loss just now going on, and every year it is getting worse—between the price of store cows and the price of fat cows. In fact, the dairyman is hit twice. His cow may be of as good quality as he likes, but it is only secondary beef at the best, and there is a loss of £5 to £8 on every cow handled, because so many Irish cows go down with tuberculosis. Irish cows seem to be liable to that disease. Possibly the climate is to blame, for I find if I keep Irish cows long enough, a considerable proportion of them sooner or later become tuberculous. Canadian cows seem to be sounder, to be grown upon sounder lines, and to have a better constitution generally.

508

Labour and
Wages.

We have first-rate labour in our country. It is very much better than when I worked on the land myself. About 30 years ago we were nearly out of the best labour. Wages rose very much in our large towns in Scotland about 35 years ago. At that time our agricultural wages were low. Wages have now risen very much, and the demand has fallen off in the town. We consider a man in the country at £1 a week better off than his brother in town at 28s. I have had that acknowledged by the men themselves. Though our wages are very high, our men work well, and can do many things, so that if you take into account the quality of the work it is not really dearer, although it costs more money.

Duties.

A duty of 2s. would not make 1d. difference to the price of bread here. My hay affords a parallel case. One of my farms is in Fifeshire, and I send a ton of hay to Dundee to sell at the present price of £4 a ton. A ton of hay from my farm near Dundee brings £4 also. On the Fife hay I pay 2s. 6d. for the ferry boat, not the man who buys the hay; and my impression is that the 2s. would be paid by the American if it was worth his while to send his wheat here. The same would apply to the German potatoes. If there was a duty it would be paid by the Germans, perhaps even to the extent of 5s. a ton.

WITNESS No. 101.

MR. WILLIAM E. BEST

(Tiller and Grazier, The Cairn, Aghalee, Antrim).

I hold 325 acres, half in tillage and half pasture and meadow.

Much land formerly tilled is out of cultivation, lying under pasture, often badly sown out, in poor condition, and employing 75 % less labour. In each of our branches of agriculture by better treatment we have greatly improved crops. Some have been less remunerative through lower prices and more difficulty in finding a market. Extended use of machinery and lower rents have helped to counterbalance the fall in prices, the scarcity of labour and increased wages. Rents have fallen 30 to 40 %. The Ulster farmer always had to erect buildings, make fences, and improve his farm. We do this in a more permanent way now we are buying our freeholds through Government. The average farm in Antrim and Down is 30 acres. In Ireland 40 acres is a good farm, where the farmer and his family do all the labour. The Purchase Acts have led to improved farming. We grow a little wheat. Grass seed is a much larger industry than formerly. The area quality and yield have increased, the seed is purer, and more skill is applied in saving crops. Pasture has improved chiefly by using artificial fertilizers and giving more cake to cattle and sheep—4 or 5 times more cake is used than 20 years ago. We are producing heavier crops of oats, owing to better rotation and adopting better varieties. Formerly we repeated the oats for two years in succession, with bad results. Most Irish oats are black. Canadian Banners are the best oats. I am experimenting with natural cross fertilization, as recommended by Professor Jamieson, of Aberdeen. For oats we use more manure—consisting of sulphate of ammonia, muriate or sulphur of potash and basic slag, or superphosphate of lime. We produce better crops of swedes and potatoes by improved varieties, better cultivation, and more liberal manuring. We sell swedes at a lower price, and have as good a profit as before; they are used for food for breeding stock. A fair crop is 20 to 30 tons per acre. We grow red, yellow, and intermediate mangolds for use late in the season when swedes fail. Yellow mangold has more saccharine, and is better for milk than red. Potato growing has improved. More spraying is used to safeguard against disease. It reduces prices by producing abundant crops. I have better profits from potatoes in bad years. When the price is low I sell potatoes to my neighbours for feeding. Up-to-date and Black Skerry potatoes are very successful. We also grow Eldorados and Northern Star. We benefit by changing and taking better care of seed. We export many potatoes to America, and pay 40s. per ton duty, which is more than we get for them on the farm. I gave up breeding pigs because it was troublesome and uncertain—too much night nursing, &c. We sell our wool locally for conversion into cloth.

Labour has become scarcer, dearer, and less efficient through the attraction of capable workers to towns for better employment and higher wages. The labour remaining takes less interest and does not work as well. If we could give better wages and make the country as attractive as towns, that would remedy it. We have not many able-bodied men left; they are mostly invalids, aged, or very young. One of my men (receiving 6s. a week) was working on the same farm in 1836. We get occasional workers from houses where there is hand loom weaving.

Wages have increased in recent years. Able-bodied men receive 10s. to 12s. and a cottage rent free, with land for potatoes and vegetables, or they live with the farmer, receiving £7 to £12 per half-year, besides bed and board.

Potatoes by rail to Belfast cost 3s. 2d. to 3s. 9d. per ton (according to quantity). I pay 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d. for carting in the city, besides carting from farm to railway. Produce costs 2s. 6d. by sea from Belfast to Liverpool. I pay 3s. 6d. by rail from Moira to Belfast. Potatoes cost nearly as much to Belfast (20 miles) as from New York to Liverpool. The Agricultural Department is friendly, but congestion of work prevents it taking up complaints against railways, except in extreme cases.

The provision of practical agricultural education has advanced lately, and the efforts of the Department of Agriculture itinerant instructors and the County Livestock Committee have had effect in improved livestock and greater use of artificial fertilizers. Technical training in Scotland and on the Continent is better than ours. Our men should be better trained to handle their tools. The systems successful 30 years ago are unworkable now, and some farmers recognise the necessity of altering their methods and take advantage of the improved education, but many are slow to change—they know little about the Agricultural Department except that derived from itinerant instructors and leaflets.

We are well off for cottages, built by the local authorities, but they are largely used by fishermen, weavers, and employes on roads. Many agricultural labourers live in cottages, but half of them are housed and fed by the farmer. If my ploughman requires a cottage, he gets it built by the District Council, with Government aid. In 6 months he may leave my service, but wants the cottage. I engage another man, and another cottage has to be built. Weavers and others should hold their cottage direct from the local authority, but farmers should control their labourers' tenure. If money were advanced to farmers to build cottages for labourers, they would build as good cottages, not so costly as the Council builds (which cost £150 to £200 each). I have 23 cottages, and, instead of asking the local Council, I prefer to build for my labourers.

Rates have slightly increased. The Banu drainage scheme is being inspected and reported on. Meanwhile we pay a tax for drainage without deriving much advantage. The Government have been very remiss in this matter.

I purchased my farm 10 years ago, and pay 15s. per acre, annual Government instalment; labour, 25s.; feeding stuff, 5s.; machinery, 5s.; rates and taxes, 3s. 6d.; manure, 10s., consisting of 25 % dairy manure, bought in Belfast, carried by rail to the station, and carted to the farm, and 75 % artificial fertilizers.

If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals had the effect of raising wages, it would create more general prosperity which would react and benefit us. It would be no direct benefit to farmers unless the tariff on food were sufficient to raise prices considerably, the duties at present proposed would not affect prices much, and any slight advances would be more than counterbalanced by higher prices for machinery and labour. The effect of the duties would be increased wages and a tendency to increased employment.

A closer union between the old country and her Colonies would be a decided advantage to the Colonies by protecting the British market for the Colonial producer.

State of
Agriculture.

510

Labour.

511

Wages.

Railway and
Shipping Rates.

Education.

Cottage
Accommodation.

512

Local Rates.

Annual
Outgoings.

Duties.

Preference.

MR. VERDEN HENRY BETTINSON

(Farmer and Grazier, Water Newton, Wansford, Huntingdonshire).

State of
Agriculture.

I farm 730 acres, of which 247 are grass, the rest arable. My immediate neighbourhood may be worse than others, but it is simply coming to disaster. My farm is a mixed farm. I occupy some very valuable land, and some almost worthless; it is part strong land, suitable for oats and beans, and part turnip and barley land; some of it very heavy clay indeed. This stronger land, in a good season, was very prolific—more so really than the light land. The district south of me is principally strong land, and although expensive to cultivate used to be, for quantity and quality combined, the best wheat-growing area in the country. Some 6 or 10 years back much of the land round me was laid down to grass, in some places with common and in others with very expensive seeds; but in either case the grass runs to a sort of weak herbage that is of no value whatever, and the land takes 4 or 5 seasons to bring it again into a corn-growing state, causing great loss to both landlord and tenant. Both wheat and barley growing are certainly less remunerative. We can grow good barleys on our light land, but the drop from the few choice samples to the second class is so great that barley growing is now quite as much at a discount as wheat growing was years back. The chief cause of decline in agriculture is the fall in prices, and I date it from about 1883 or 1885, not from 1879, for agriculture was certainly above par in the seventies, that is up to 1874, but not after. Once wheat got to £2 a quarter; we thought it was disastrous. I date my fall from a profit to a disaster from 1885, but before then we could not work at a profit. Now we wonder whether agriculture will die out altogether. Since 1885 at different times wheat had to be grown at a less price than now, and we trusted to the barley trade to keep us going; but now that has gone worse than the wheat, and the farmers' capital is fast going with it. I do not grow potatoes. All branches are less remunerative than they used to be, and with the exception, perhaps of sheep, considerably so.

Sheep

I keep a flock of ewes and I try to finish them. They have paid better the last year than for several years past. The land in several instances is badly cultivated, and in many cases where good flocks of ewes were once kept not a sheep is owned on the farm, because the farmer's capital is going; he draws on his stock when he cannot draw on his banker, and therefore they gradually decrease. The banker refuses more money, and the farmer goes to his sheep first, because he can carry on his occupation by replacing his own sheep by gist sheep. In 3 or 4 places which I used to visit in the spring, and buy stock to graze, there is not a sheep on the farm owned by the tenant.

Labour.

We have no difficulty in getting labour because so much land being laid down to grass, we need less; what we get is of poor quality and we miss the skilled labour of years ago. I have never known it scarcer and the work is now done by older men. Try as we will, and we do try to keep our young men on the land, we cannot. It is hardly to be expected that they will stay for 10s. and 12s. when at 15 or 16 years of age they can earn 16s. and 18s. a week on the railway and in the shoe trade. The sorest point to a farmer is that he rears the youths, pays for all their education, and then they go away. The ordinary rate of wage has increased 1s. or 2s. per week. If we are to keep our young men on the land we must rear and educate them for it, and we must pay a rate of wage competitive with other industries. I employ quite as many hands as 20 years ago.

Cottage
Accommodation.

We do not suffer from a want of cottages, they are all well kept, and our labourers are very well taken care of. In some districts they suffer from a want of cottages and cannot get labour.

Education.

If we could keep the young men on the land, I think we are quite competent to educate them, and this would most certainly be done better through the farmer, the employer. You cannot give the young men an interest in rural pursuits by giving them more education when they are quite young, before they go away to work—such as by teaching them agriculture, or botany, or to take an interest in animals, &c.

Rent.

In 1881 I paid £1,100 a year; now I pay £700, and there must be a further drop. I made considerably more money when the rent was £1,100 than now when it is £700. For the first 3 years the average per annum of corn sold was £2,790; for the past three years it is £1,700. These figures are practically from the same acreage.

Annual
Outgoings.

Labour, 25s.; artificial food and manure, 12s.; rates and taxes, 2s. 6d., all per acre; this is net after deducting allowance under the Agricultural Rating Act. We have no Education Rate yet, we are a purely rural district, with no extraordinary Urban charges—perhaps a little lighting from a neighbouring village. Annual expenditure on new machinery varies considerably. The last 5 years would be far in excess of 10 years. Since the labourers have left us we have had to meet the work by using more implements. I have a good stock of machinery now, but it wears out very quickly. A binder at £34 has done its work in about 10 years. During the last 10 years I should say I have spent £20 a year in new machines, without repairs. The blacksmith's bills and repairs are the heaviest bills we have to contend with.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

This was a great benefit, but the increased rates are fast taking that benefit away. If this Act were not renewed our rates would be higher than they ever have been in my experience. The concession I got was worth on my occupation of 750 acres from £20 to £30 a year. The occupier gets the benefit and the landlord could not put up the rent, for rents have been falling steadily.

Local Rates.

Our rates and taxes are no heavier than in other parishes but, taking agriculture as a whole, the rates are a burden.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates do not affect me at all directly. Nothing is being done in my district to improve market organization, or by combination to put more stuff out together at the same time. In a district growing large quantities of potatoes, &c., some arrangement might be made with the railways for carrying produce at lower rates, if they could be met by an organization for getting stuff in bulk. For goods in bulk, potatoes, straw and hay there is room for reduction, but the rate for corn has never been considered very excessive. The merchant must take rates into account when he is offering a price for produce, and if the rate is excessive it must fall upon the grower.

I do not agree with co-operative buying and selling at all.

The suggested duty of 2s. a quarter on foreign corn cannot do the farmer any harm. The advantage would arise from a natural tendency to improve trade all round, and we should come in with the other trades, there being more prosperity in the country at large. I do not regard the proposals as protectionist, and I am quite certain that if the farmers were more prosperous the country would be too.

We get more implements every year from the States and Canada, and a 10 per cent. duty would seriously increase their cost, and be detrimental as compared with benefits obtained in other directions. There should certainly be a higher duty on dead meat than on live. I favour the taxation of barley, but I do not see where the line can be drawn between feeding stuffs and barley for brewing. Maize should be taxed as well as other corn. Farmers would benefit with the offals if the milling were done in England by having rather an increased duty on flour, and we should have cheap feeding stuffs.

I have never yet known an advance in the price of farm produce that the farm labourer has not benefited from, through a natural demand on his part and a concession thereto by his employer. If the produce of the duties could be employed in paying the Education and other rates, the land would benefit to that extent. The Pure Beer Bill would have benefited the Midlands largely. I am no advocate of very dear food. With bread at 4d. a loaf gleaners have disappeared.

Retaliation could do the farmers a great deal of harm. We export nothing in the form of dead stock. We have nothing to retaliate on.

Co-operation.
Duties.

517

Effect on Labourer.

Retaliation.

518

WITNESS No. 103.

The Late Mr. JAMES BIGGAR

(Farmer and Cattle Exporter, Vice-President, Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, Grange Farm, Dalbeattie, N.B.)

I farm 800 acres—about 480 in arable rotation and 320 in grass and meadow. My farm is arable, combined with dairying and stock raising.

For 15 years following 1879 there was a gradual fall in the price of beef, mutton, wool, &c. Along with this fall in prices, there was a gradual fall of 25 % to 30 % in rents, in some cases 50 %; a slight fall in wages from the highest point, and a considerable fall in prices of manure and feeding stuff. These, combined with a somewhat steadier level of price for produce, have left the farmer a fair opportunity of making his farm pay. Farmers lost money while the prices kept falling, but for the past 10 years they have probably held their own. Beef production has not been a steadily remunerative business, owing to fall in prices; mutton and wool have done better. Dairy farming, when well managed, has been the best system of farming in the district.

Those engaged in dairying find great difficulty in getting suitable labour. Other branches also have some difficulty as regards casual labour, but not so much. Male labour is slightly dearer, and female labour very considerably so.

I attribute the change in the condition of agriculture to the reduction in market prices, due to competition of foreign produce imported in large quantity.

The milk trade has been greatly developed by favourable railway rates, but other industries have not been affected.

Agricultural education has borne good fruit, especially along the lines of dairy instruction.

Cottages are being greatly improved where needed, but in some cases, where cultivation has been more or less discontinued, cottages are empty.

Local rates for education and roads have increased.

The annual outgoings on my farm are:—Rent, 25s. per acre; labour, 18s.; feeding stuffs, 30s.; manure, 10s.; machinery, implements, and tackle, 3s. to 4s.; rates and taxes, 1s. to 1s. 3d.

I strongly support Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, but I do not anticipate any marked rise in prices as a direct result of import duties on imported food. If Colonial produce were admitted free and only foreign imports taxed, I would expect a gradual increase in the volume of Colonial products, which would equalise the falling off, if any, in foreign supplies. I think, therefore, it is probable that no direct increase of price would result. If, however, we secured a larger market for our manufacture, and got a larger share of Colonial trade, the country generally must be more prosperous, and the agricultural interest would thereby be benefited. The agricultural labourer would, undoubtedly, share in any rise in price of labour, but I am convinced that any advantage to the agricultural industry must be only its share of any general improvement in national prosperity. Unfortunately the argument that any benefit to agriculture must inevitably pass, in time, into the pockets of the landowner, though quite fallacious, is one that appeals to an audience of working men, especially in an urban constituency. The argument is perfectly unsound; it is only in falling markets and on existing contracts that the landlord gets more than his share of agricultural profits. In a rising market he gets less than his share. The same applies, perhaps, to the labourer, but in a much less degree.

A preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my farming.

State of
Agriculture.Labour and
Wages.Causes of
Change.

Railway Rates.

Education.

Cottage
Accommodation.
Local Rates.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

Preference.

519

520

WITNESS No. 104.

MR. JOHN BOLGER

(Farmer, Ferns, Co. Wexford).

I hold about 100 acres of both tillage and grazing land. I till from 20 to 30 acres yearly in the usual rotation of barley, oats (we grow very little wheat), roots, a good deal of turnips and some potatoes, meadowing, &c. Wexford is one of the largest barley growing counties in Ireland.

521 State of
Agriculture.

Tillage is on the decline owing to the very low prices, and it would go down much more only the land is such that it must be tilled every 3 or 4 years. It runs out. It is a light soil and no matter how well you put it down in pasture it goes back again to moss and furze. If it were not for that we should have hardly any tillage. The breeding of cattle and bringing them round to yearlings and 2 year olds pays fairly well.

Barley.

Barley is the only crop that pays in the County of Wexford, but it has not been paying very well for the last 10 or 15 years. The great imports of foreign barley have reduced the prices. For the last 10 or 12 years the very best price of barley has been about 14s. ; 25 years ago it was 20s. and 22s. In the county our average tillage of barley is about 30,000 acres. On an average of 10 barrels to the acre that would be about 300,000 barrels, and not over 150,000 barrels of that is fit for malting and distilling purposes at the high price. The other 150,000 would run into a second quality barley—a feeding barley. Our best barley would be 14s. 6d. At present prices I buy barley for both Jamieson's and Power's Distilleries, and that is the average price I have paid. The prices of barley paid to the farmers from October 1896 to October 1904 by the distillers per barrel are :—

1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
15/-	14/6	14/-	14/-	14/-	14/-	14/-	14/-	14/-

Oats.

We have been paying farmers for oats for the last 3 or 4 months 10s. a barrel* or £5 10s. per ton. German oats are coming in to Dublin for about the same price or a little lower. They are very good white oats. Our oats are principally black and tawny oats, and the German oats are a little the better of the two. If you wanted to buy oats you would buy them in preference at the same price. The average crop of oats on my own farm is about 10 to 11 barrels per Statute acre. The average October prices per barrel of oats from 1892 to 1904 to the farmer are as follow :—

1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	1904.
8/3	10/-	7/3	6/6	9/3	8/3	8/-	8/3	8/6	9/3	8/9	8/-	9/-

Cattle Breeding.

The breed of cattle has improved. This is owing to the number of agricultural shows that we have had in the country, and the interest that farmers are taking in getting good breeds, shorthorns and polled angus.

Sheep.

We produce a good many sheep which we export to Liverpool and Bristol and all the different English markets. They are mostly white-faced sheep—Border Leicesters—and they are very highly approved of in England. They graze very fast. They pay well on farms suitable for raising sheep.

Pigs.

We breed a great many pigs in Wexford and fatten most of them. The prices are about 50s. a cwt. now. That is a fair price at this time of the year. At this season of the year the farmer has to buy all his pig feeding ; in the autumn he has not, he grows most of his pig feeding, so that 40s. would pay him better than 50s. now. Any quantity of foreign bacon is imported. Nearly all the people in the country are eating foreign bacon now.

Horse Breeding.

There is a great deal of horse breeding, principally hunters and harness horses. We breed very few Clydesdale or shire horses. The horses have held their own. They are about the only thing that has held its own during the last 20 years. We get about the same price for a good horse, and he is always saleable. We have good thoroughbred hunter stallions in our neighbourhood, but the farmers are not assisted by any society in keeping good mares. In order to keep the good fillies in the country if a farmer could show a 3-year-old filly that was a good promising mare and perfectly sound he should get a premium for keeping it. It is a great hardship for Ireland that the Germans should be allowed to buy all the $\frac{3}{4}$ -bred mares in the country and take them away for breeding purposes. That is where the poverty of the country comes in. A man has 2 mares, a good straight mare suitable to breed from, and a wrong one. He needs money and he sells the good mare and breeds from the wrong one himself. If that farmer was in a better position he would never think of selling that good mare. That is one of the great reasons why the quality of horses has been going down. I am connected with both the Wexford and Enniscorthy Agricultural Societies and I have heard that very thing discussed over and over again. The great increase of motor cars has not affected the price of horses so far. My impression is that it will not affect them so much as people think.

Rent and Land
Purchases.
Profits.

We have had 6 reductions in rent and almost two-thirds of Wexford has changed hands. The tenants have bought their farms on satisfactory terms by mutual agreement.

Taking farming all round, in proportion to the acreage farmed the profits have decreased, and if it was not for the reduction in the rents in the last 10 years farmers could not hold on. Cattle are much cheaper than they were 15 years ago. They have been about a standard price for the last 10 years. They are very low at present, almost unsaleable. I could not get 10s. more than I paid for the cattle in April, and I have fed them well on fairly good land and given them cake.

Labour.

Labour is very scarce in the rural districts. The farmers are not in a position to give as much employment as they should on their land, consequently they cannot pay wages to keep the labourers there. The result is that they are going away on every opportunity they can get.

Wages.

Wages have increased in the last 10 or 12 years, but not much. The labouring man who only got from 8s. to 9s. a week 10 years ago is getting now from 10s. to 12s. without a house. I pay labouring men myself 10s. a week with a house.

Causes of Change.

The great change in prices took place about 25 years ago. Corn was then 20 % higher than it was for many years after and fully 30 % higher than at present. Cattle, sheep and butter might be put down in the same category. I refer to the time barley was worth 20s. to 22s. ; oats, 14s. to 15s. ; and wheat, 20s. to 24s. a barrel. Of course the prices did not drop to what they are now suddenly. For the first 10 years after the 70's they were gradually coming down ; barley dwindled to 18s., 17s., 16s., and 15s. Nearly half the barley is sold now for 10s., 11s. and 12s., so that you may take an average price of 12s. or 12s. 6d. a barrel.

Co-operation.

We have a very important co-operative society at Enniscorthy. They buy manures and seeds and distribute them to the people ; but they cannot assist the farmers in selling their produce.

* The " barrel " as used by Irish witnesses is a measure of capacity and not of weight, corresponding in this respect to the English bushel or quarter. This will explain the apparent inconsistencies of different Irish witnesses as to the weights of a barrel of wheat and oats. The official statistics of the Irish Department of Agriculture give these returns in cwts. or tons.

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The Department of Agriculture have assisted in agricultural education, and it has been supplemented by 1d. in the £ from the rates. Many instructresses go about in the different centres lecturing on agriculture, dairying, poultry-keeping, and domestic economy, &c., but I am sorry to say there is no great improvement. The people come to the meetings and listen and they go back home and do not practice. We want something like Agricultural Schools where farmers' sons can be sent and really be taught farming in a scientific way. We want practical demonstration really.

Education.

525

In respect to methods of cultivation the climate is in favour of America and is against us. They have larger farms running into hundreds and thousands of acres, which are more easily tilled, they have better railway accommodation, they have almost no rent to pay, and freights are much less. They get their beef carried from America to Liverpool (about 5,000 miles) for about 10s. a ton, which would represent about 3s. 4d. a beast, and we have to pay from where I live to Liverpool (200 or 300 miles), 20s. a beast.

Foreign
Competition.

Local rates are a little higher since the passing of the Local Government Act, but a great many things are done for the country that had been neglected heretofore.

Local Rates.

I estimate the annual outgoings per acre on my farm at £3, that includes rent, taxes, labour, manure, implements and tackle. I calculated for a 100-acre farm. I put the rent at 15s. an acre, which would be £75. Then 4 standing labourers to do the work, £12 10s. for taxes, and £20 for additional labour, which would be the extra men we have to employ in harvest time, and boys for weeding, turnip seeding, and all that. That might be a little over £20. Then £30 for manure. For implements and tackle I only put down the interest on the capital, because it might not be fair to charge it up every year. £100 would be a fair average to supply a 100-acre farmer with machinery, so I put down £5 a year. Then there are seeds, &c. I arrived at about £290 as the outgoings, so I put it down in rough numbers at £3 an acre, which would give about £10 over for odds and ends. You cannot possibly get £10 an acre out of land, nor £5 an acre.

Annual
Outgoings.

526

If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were put into force the farmers of Ireland would benefit at once. If a tariff is put on corn, though the wheat will come in, it will not come in to the same extent, and it will give the millers a chance of competing, as it will very likely start wheat growing in this country. If the farmers could get about 3s. a barrel more for their wheat, they will commence again cultivating the land. Employment will be given, and they will be in a position to pay fair wages and to keep the people in the country; because really, after all, we have nothing in Ireland to depend upon but the land. It will benefit the labourer also and it will compensate 5 times over the increase that it will put on food. If Canada was in a position to send all the wheat we should use, the prices would still remain as they are; but that is not the general idea, because we get a lot of wheat from Russia and a lot from America. Oats are a very important crop in this country, and at the present moment are almost unsaleable both here and in Bristol and the different ports owing to German and Russian oats coming in. I am a large buyer of oats myself and I cannot get within 1s. a barrel of what I have paid for the oats I have in hand. The same thing applies to other corn merchants in Enniscorthy and Wexford and all the principal towns. Farmers will be coming in with their oats in another week, and the price they will get will be very poor indeed. The importation of store cattle would be very much against the rearing districts. Numbers of small farmers rear from 5 to 10 calves every year. Some will sell them out as 1-year-olds, others keep them till 2-year-olds. It would be the ruination of this country if they allowed the store cattle to come in from Canada. It would ruin the growers, not the big farmers but the middle-size farmers. Those are the bone and sinew of the country; those are the men that bring up the few cattle, from 5 to 10 or 15 and so on. That and tillage are the principal part of their industry.

Duties.

Effect on
Cultivation.

Importation of
Cattle.

527

WITNESS No. 105.

MR. JAMES CLARKE

(Farmer and Grazier, Port Hall, Strabane, Co. Donegal).

I can give evidence on tillage and grazing. I have 300 statute acres, more than half of which was in tillage up till 1898, since which time I have been gradually laying down grass, but am now gradually returning to tillage.

The state of agriculture in my district is the best in Ulster, and has been so for the last century. The land is good as a rule. The low land in the valley of the Foyle and round to the shores of Lough Swilley is principally alluvial, the high land to a great extent is limestone formation. The use of machinery has been increasing for years. Tillage farming has been gradually on the decline since 1876. Cattle (in fed) have dropped from 84s. per cwt. to 50s., the present price. Last year the great change was particularly in cattle. Store cattle fell most tremendously in price. Oats have fallen from 1s. 2d. per stone to 7½d. and 8½d. in the Derry market. It requires at least 9d. to pay. Wheat was selling at 25s. per barrel of 20 stone in 1874, and it was selling in the year 1891 at 12s. 6d. in the Derry market. This year the price is 15s. owing to short supply of American flour. I have had a reduction on my rented farm of 24 %. We are favoured with an excellent soil and a first-rate market, and these, and the industry of the people, keep agriculture in a flourishing condition.

State of
Agriculture.

528

With reference to the labour question. I find from my father's books that in the year 1858 his labour account without machinery to any extent, was the same, to within a few pounds, as my labour account is now with several hundred pounds of machinery in addition. By the employment of machinery we save about 25 % to 30 % of the hands, so that labour is costing 30 % to 40 % more than in my father's time, and we are getting a worse article. The difference is more appreciable where servants are kept and fed in the house. They have more wages, and have to be fed a great deal better. I attribute the deterioration in the quality of labour to the fact that all the young men are emigrating and leaving us nothing but the old men and boys. Another thing is that there seems not to be the *esprit de corps* about the labourer that there was when I was a lad. Then they took as much interest in the farm as you did yourself, but now they want to get away, and you require some person standing behind them to get them to go on with their work.

Labour.

529 Wages. The wages of farm servants who live in and of labourers with houses and other perquisites, have risen about 40 % within 20 years, calculating the extra cost of machinery.

Causes of Change. There is a change for the better in the mode of cultivation which I attribute to the greater intelligence of the younger generation. They could not exist and farm in the old slipshod fashion. The ceasing of dual ownership in the land has been a great advantage to the country, in encouraging farmers to improve not only their land but their dwellings. Even on estates of good landlords, such as the Duke of Abercorn, one can see a great change. Since the first sale under the Ashbourne Act large tracts of out-over bog have been reclaimed and good substantial houses built. And as far as I can see 95 % of Ulster tenants are willing to give a generous price for their holdings. I am satisfied with the condition of affairs so far as our land goes, but prices of produce don't leave a living wage. You cannot improve the climate with which we are not satisfied.

Market Organisation. Nothing has been done in the nature of market organisation, but the markets proper are not by any means so large as they were some years ago. Strabane, my nearest town, was a very large flax market. Now it has diminished to almost unrecognisable proportions, for the simple reason that the flax is bought at the mills by the flax buyer instead of being taken to market. This is a disadvantage to the farmer, but it has become a system and they stick to it. The best cattle are also bought at the owner's place. The cattle dealers come round and purchase the cattle on the farm. The same with good young horses.

530 Railway Rates. The Great Northern Railway Company are fairly civil to us. If we ask them anything in reason they generally give it to us. They have introduced a very cheap tariff for small packages of farm produce.

Education. Agricultural education has been given by means of lecturers from the Agricultural Department, not in County Donegal owing to some friction between the Local Authority and the Department, but in County Tyrone Valuable instruction is given by lectures, pamphlets and experiment plots, and no doubt they have done much good. The young men are taking greater interest in the use of artificial manure and are cultivating their land in a more intelligent way. Store and fat cattle are being sold by weight to some extent, which you would not have heard about some time ago, and any man accustomed to cattle can now make a pretty fair guess at the weight of a beast.

Cottage Accommodation. I have plenty of cottage accommodation on my own land but the present system of building labourers' cottages has not been a success. When a man gets into a labourer's cottage he becomes independent and would rather take up small dealing than remain an agricultural labourer. In many cases the tenants are not what the Act intended the houses for. I know one case where a man has 4 or 5 cows and neither he nor his family do any work in the shape of agriculture. Another has several cattle and horses, with which he works at a brickworks. One house is occupied by a poacher, another by an old couple well over 70 years; several have tenants who grow oats on their potato plots, and at least one did not take the trouble to crop his land. In County Cavan, where I spent 5 years as a Land Commissioner, the farmers do not think the cottages have done them any good.

531 Local Rates. Local rates increased at the beginning of the County Council's regime but they have dropped back slightly. We are not getting the same value for them. The roads are not in the same condition. In 1889 my local rates were £47 10s. 11d.; in 1891, £39; in 1898, £54 10s. 3d.; in 1902, £37 13s.; in 1903, £55 2s. 3d.; in 1904, £57.

Annual Outgoings. The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are:—Rent, 20s.; labour, including the keep of four horses, 25s. 6d.; feeding stuff, 2s. 6d.; artificial manure, 2s. 6d.; farming implements, 2s. 6d.; rates and taxes, 4s.; total, 57s. In the year 1874 my outgoings were £2,986, and my incomings were £3,326, leaving a net profit of £340; in the year 1876 my outgoings were £2,940, and my incomings were £3,360, leaving a clear net profit of £420; in the year 1902 my outgoings were £2,859, and my receipts were £3,046, leaving a profit of £187; in the year 1903 my outgoings were £2,951, my receipts were £2,933, a deficit of £18; and in the year 1904 I had a deficit of £106.

Duties. The duties proposed upon agricultural imports are so small that they will not be felt. They will be of no benefit whatever unless a grant is made for reduction of local taxes, and it is my opinion that in a very short time, even if America and Russia were shut out altogether, the Colonies would be able to swamp the markets. It would be desirable, in the interest of agriculture, to increase the duties and to devote some part of the revenue to the relief of local taxation. Raw materials, the manufacture from which would give labour in the country, should not be taxed. In 1903 23,000 tons of flour were brought into the port of Londonderry.

532 Effect on Milling. This represents about 35,000 tons of wheat, or the produce of 46,606 statute acres at 120 stone per acre. The cost of converting wheat into flour is about 20s. per ton of flour and 75 % of this is wages. In other words £23,000 would have been spent in this neighbourhood in the milling alone, besides the amount of increased agricultural labour. In addition the farmer would have had the by-product of bran and pollard at 25 % less than he has been paying. In fact, he was paying more for bran and pollards than his own wheat was worth. In 1874 six flour mills were at work in Derry and the neighbourhood; now only 2 exist, and up to 6 months ago these were not kept busy. Foreign oatmeal is offered in Belfast at £8 10s. per ton, which means the farmer in Ireland gets about 7½d. per stone for oats. A Glasgow firm who used to buy all their meal in the north of Ireland, a short time ago, are getting from one mill in Canada over 2,000 tons of oatmeal per annum. To produce the oats to make this would require 3,700 acres of Ulster land at 130 stone per acre. This firm do not purchase any meal here now. As the Colonies can in a short time supply as much farm produce as we are at present getting, if this were admitted free we would soon be as we are. I strongly advocate a good substantial duty on flour. 20s. per ton on flour would mean 1½d. per stone, or less than ½d. on the 4lb. loaf; say an artisan used 2 stone of flour per week it would mean 3d. per week extra, the duty proposed on tea would much more than balance this. This would be a good deal more beneficial than a duty on wheat. Anything that would give labour in the country would be an advance. For my own industry the tax on cattle would have more beneficial results.

WITNESS No. 106.

MR. T. S. CORPE

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Lufton, near Yeovil, representing the Somerset Chamber of Agriculture and the South Somerset Farmers' Club).

I have been accustomed to mixed farming all my life—the breeding and grazing of cattle, sheep, pigs, horses, and the management of a mixed farm generally. I am farming about 80 acres of grass land. I have nearly given up business; but for over 30 years I farmed from 250 to 370 acres, comprising light sand, heavy clay and deep loam. I had about 120 acres of arable. I have often milked from 35 to 40 cows. We made cheese and butter.

My experience of agriculture is that there is plenty of hard work and very little profit in it. As a rule the breeding of stock and the management of a good dairy pay better than the fattening of cattle. We have a large factory for milk in the town and a good deal of it goes to London. Some of the farmers find an outlet for their milk by supplying a certain factory which is turning out Ivel cheese. We make Cheddar cheese, but this year, 1904, prices have been bad. A good many dairies have made 42s. and some 56s. per cwt. A very good loaf cheddar would be worth about 56s., but where one man would make 56s. I daresay 10 would not be able to. We make butter and the price is about 14d. now. We feed pigs but do not cure bacon except for home use. We have a difficulty in getting rid of the pigs, and we do not make them more than 7 or 8 score, we get 8s. a score. A lot of money has been lost on pigs during the last 2 years. We grew a quantity of flax years ago, and that meant a good deal of labour, but we had to give it up on account of foreign competition. We have been going to the bad since 1879, when the bad times began, and I doubt if 1 farmer in 10 has made 5% on his invested capital since. Many people have been obliged to give up their farms.

We have a short supply of labour, and the men do not do more than $\frac{2}{3}$ the work they used to do. Many will not do what they are told, but will do something else if you are not behind them. Very few take an interest in the farm work. Some have left to go into the towns and about 300 men are employed at large quarries in the vicinity.

The rate of wages has increased over 40% during the last 30 years. I paid 9s. a week from 1870 to 1875, and since then the wages have risen to 12s., 14s., and 16s., besides perquisites, which include house rent, potato ground, coal, cider and harvest money. When the labourers had 9s. a week they had not so many perquisites as now. The women did some gleaning, baked their own bread, and went out to work. The labourer to-day is very much better off though he buys the baker's bread and his wife refuses to do gleaning. Close to Yeovil there is a big gloving centre and the women make gloves. They work at home and send in their "gloving," as they call it, once or twice a week.

Very few new cottages have been built except where the landlord is a rich man.

The change in the condition of agriculture began soon after 1879 and was caused by bad seasons and bad prices. The effect of the fall in prices has been the seeding down of a very large quantity of arable land.

The means of carriage by rail have been the same in this neighbourhood for the past 35 years. Railway rates give an undue advantage to the foreigner.

Open markets have generally merged into auctions. There is not much advantage in that, because many of the dealers combine and will not oppose each other.

There is scarcely any co-operation in buying or selling except amongst the purchasers of our produce. We are trying to start a kind of co-operative society now, in connection with our Chamber, but it does not take very well. At Taunton they have a big affair. The farmers in my neighbourhood will never unite.

With the object of encouraging agricultural education the Somerset County Council took 140 acres of one of the farms I occupied within 6 miles of Taunton, and they made a big mess of it by having an unsuitable farm—it was very heavy stiff clay land—and an incompetent Committee. They took it for 7, 14 or 21 years, and they gave it up in $3\frac{1}{2}$ years.

Local rates have increased in recent years. My parish is the smallest in the Yeovil Union and has about 40 odd inhabitants. In looking over the receipt and payment book, which dates back to 1836, I find the total poor rates paid then were £33 1s.; in 1840, £43 19s. 2d.; in 1850, £45 18s. 9d.; in 1860, £32 19s. 2d.; in 1870, £40 10s. 7½d.; in 1880, £67 9s. 2d.; 1890, £67 1s.; in 1900, £52 15s. 2d.; in 1904, £74 3s. 2d. The increase recently is accounted for partly by the Education rate; and the roads, since the County Council have had the management of them, cost a lot more.

My rent is £1 15s. an acre; labour costs £1, feeding stuffs £1 12s. an acre, in addition to home-grown corn, which amounts to about 5s. an acre; artificial manure is very little used in my neighbourhood, it is no good upon my light sands; machinery and implements cost £1 an acre, including wear and tear. That is reckoning the stock we have in hand. I consider for 300 acres, you want £300 worth of machinery. We do not lay out £300 every year. I have had my stock of implements a good many years and I scarcely lay out anything now, though £10 a year would not cover it. We have to keep pace with the times and go in for binders, swathe turners and tedders or kickers, &c. Rates are 2s. 9d. in the £, which has been the average for the last 3 years, in addition to which the landlord pays 2s. 6d. per acre for land and income tax.

I am in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. We may get a small rise in the price of corn for a time. This would cause more of the old leys to be ploughed up and make more labour. If the land made more rent the landlords would get the advantage, not the tenant, because, if there is a farm to be let there are so many after it, and if one will not pay the money the other will. The advantage to the labourer would be more demand for his work, and probably higher wages. Preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my farming.

State of
Agriculture.

Labour.

Wages.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Causes of
Change.

Railway Rates.

Market
Organisation.

Co-operation.

Education.

Local Rates.

Annual
Outgoings.

Duties.

Preference.

COLONEL SHARMAN-CRAWFORD

(Crawfordsburn, County Down, Ireland; Farmer, Grazier, Chairman of the Council of and representing the Royal Ulster Agricultural Association, which comprises practically the 7 or 8 counties in Ulster, and is composed of over 1,000 members, including landlords, tenants, manufacturers, &c.).

I have 2 demesne mixed farms, 700 and 500 acres. Demesne farming is more expensive than ordinary farming. Our district has mostly mixed farming. Few grass lands go more than 3 or 4 years without being broken up. Besides tillage we have dairy farming, flax (wheat growing, formerly large, has disappeared), store feeding, fat cattle, butter and pigs.

**State of
Agriculture.**

Dairy farming near large towns or tillage farms is fairly satisfactory considering the price of milk. In winter, owing to cold weather and importations from Denmark, Russia, &c., the price of butter falls 25 %. In summer the price is better through the improved weather and stoppage of importations. Store cattle prices were very unremunerative formerly, but much feeding is now done in the North. Fat cattle have greatly increased, and the raising of stores has become much more successful through the stoppage of Argentine and other live stores. We make more money by sending our young cattle to England to be sold than by keeping and feeding them for the winter. Beef is lower in price this year, and it is more profitable to sell the beast a year before for store cattle. All prices have fallen except of store cattle which has increased. Near big towns milk has kept up its price. Pigs are largely produced, but the price of pigs, bacon, &c., has greatly depreciated. Hay seed (thrashed out of hay) is very remunerative in North of Ireland, but prices are lower this year. Flax was a very important and most remunerative branch of local agriculture, but much less is grown now, chiefly for want of suitable labour. Oats are remunerative, in spite of large importations, because they are much better grown. Irish oats command as good a price on the English market as good English oats, taking into consideration carriage, which is a little higher, and there is also a good Irish demand. Oats are not grown nearly so much as they were, but they still grow where wheat has disappeared. We make most money in oats when bad harvests, especially in England, keep up prices. Few northern farms consume their own produce, and bad harvests are good for them because they can sell their crops. But where we feed much cattle a good harvest is better.

Labour.

Labour is much scarcer and dearer, and it is nearly impossible to get women at turnip thinning and harvest time. Labourers want more wages and do less work. They go to the towns because there is more employment there, housing in the country has not been good, and there is no occupation in the winter. We are starting occupations to give winter work, such as cottage industries, which are spreading. If this increases it may keep the young people on the farm. Emigration, which is less than it was, takes the best of the young population, leaving us the weaker or wasters. The prosperity of agriculture greatly depends on the labour question. In many cases amongst my own tenants, where the children stop on the farm, the father makes money, and the reverse takes place when they leave him, and he has to employ labour. The tendency is for boys and girls to leave the country and go into towns. Owing to the fall in prices the farmer cannot employ sufficient workers to properly cultivate his land.

Wages.

Wages have very largely increased the last 30 or 40 years. We pay labourers 14s. a week—women used to go out in harvest time for sixpence a day. Now you cannot get a woman or girl, they all go into the city.

Rent.

Deterioration of prices has been partly met by reduction of rent. Irish rents are fixed by law. They have been reduced in the last 25 years 35 to 50 %.

**Railway and
Shipping Rates.**

Railway rates are very high. To send from Belfast to London is dearer than to New York and back to London. It is very unfair that Danish butter comes to London at about half the cost for butter from Ireland. We can send butter to Chicago cheaper than to London.

Co-operation.

In the North of Ireland, the farmers have been afraid of co-operation, which has not spread much, and the southern farmers keep the price of butter down by sending in large quantities from places where co-operative societies exist.

Education.

The Board of Agriculture and the County Councils are doing much for agricultural education, including instruction in milk, butter and husbandry. It is carried out by a committee of the county council, supervised by the Board of Agriculture, which has to approve all schemes and appointments. This has produced admirable results, and will produce more in butter-making, milk and poultry, and improved means of packing (in which Ireland was very deficient), and improved education of growers. They are taught what to breed from. Premium bulls are largely increasing, many Irish store cattle go to Shrewsbury, all greatly improved. Irish butter was formerly of very variable quality, but now from instruction they are making it in large quantities of regular quality. Good Irish butter can now compete with Danish.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

Cottage accommodation has not been good but the powers for providing it are being used. The farmers were prejudiced against giving sites on their land. In Ireland it is not the landlord but principally the occupier who has to do with the site.

**Foreign
Competition.**

Denmark and other countries have bounties, educational advantages and lower railway rates, and in Great Britain foreigners have a dumping ground without duties. Danish butter competes so well through Denmark's winter dairying (which we cannot afford in Ireland), and by subsidies to steamers, &c., produce can be dumped into London at a much cheaper rate than we can send from Ireland. We could have butter in winter if we got the price which would pay for feeding the cattle.

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes have much increased.

Outgoings.

Rent, 12s. an acre; labour, 30s.; feeding stuffs, 30s.; manure, 10s.; machinery, 5s.; rates and taxes, 5s.; total, £4 12s.

The members of my council have all kinds of political opinions but 95 % are in favour of tariff reform. Mr. Chamberlain's scheme would benefit the whole country, and farmers, labourers, and all of us must get some of the profit. Ireland would gain more than any part of Great Britain. It would enable us to open up land for the growing of wheat, flax, &c. We were formerly a great milling district, now there are practically none of the country mills working by water, there being excellent natural water power in Ulster. The mills could be very easily re-established and would add greatly to the general prosperity of Ireland. Our district is opposed to the free import of store cattle. My council and every practical farmer is of opinion (it is one of the strongest points they asked me to impress upon this Committee) that the law should be kept absolutely as it is and that the Government will continue to stop the importation of store cattle. People who used to feed, finding it not pay so well, now sell their cattle young as stores. If American pork paid an import tax (not too high), the greater part of the tax would be paid by the producer, which would enable us to get a better price for our pork. At 10s. it would make no difference in price to the consumer here. The effect of protection would be that if the prices of farm produce increased, the labourer must benefit by the natural desire of the farmer to increase production. Much land which has been going out would come into tillage again, more labour would be employed, and farmers would be in a position to give better wages, paying high wages if labour is scarce. This would stop families going abroad and into towns, as there would be employment for all the members. There is no use having a sixpenny loaf that you are buying at 4½d. if you have no money to buy it with.

Duties.

541

Canada is rapidly increasing its corn production, and if our Colonies send us enough produce untaxed we should be in no better position than before. If the Colonies produce less than the entire quantity required for our consumption, and duties are placed on the balance coming in, we benefit to the extent of the tax paid. If the Colonies produce all we require, we are as badly off as before, for dumping would still continue. If tariffs are levied on all foreign products, and a preference or a reduction made on colonial products, Ireland must benefit largely by relief from taxation and increased agricultural prosperity.

Preference.

542

WITNESS No. 108.

MR. GEORGE E. DAINTREE

(Farmer, Land Agent and Valuer, Chatteris, Cambs.).

I farm 1,300 acres in Cambridgeshire and adjacent lands in Norfolk, chiefly fen land, though some of it is what we call strong land.

My evidence will be principally on corn growing and the rearing of draught and other horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry and butter-making.

Agriculture in my district is generally, I think, in a bad state. We lose money in the production of wheat, barley and oats. I grow several hundred acres of wheat, though scarcely so much as I did 20 years ago, because we must, on account of the rotation of crops, and because the fen land is more particularly adapted for the growth of wheat and oats than anything else. To make it pay at all it ought to make at least £7 an acre without the straw. That would be just about a living price, but it has not made that the last few years. I do not value the straw because I do not sell it. It is used as food for the cattle. I grow a few potatoes. That is a remunerative crop. Taking it all round on an average of years it pays; but I have had potatoes several times left to rot in the pits, as there was no sale for them; the price being so low owing to the foreign supply. If you get a supply from the foreigners it must make a great difference to our home-grown supply. The raising of horses is very uncertain; you get so many blemished ones amongst them. Sheep pay very well. Pigs have done badly this year, but previous to that they did very well for 2 or 3 years. We have a great deal of poultry, and we make butter too, but we really make that more for the purpose of getting the skim milk for the calves than we do for the butter itself. We find a great deal of competition in poultry and butter. All these branches have become less remunerative in recent years. Wheat in 1881 sold at 45s. 4d.; in 1904 at 30s. 4d. Oats in 1881 sold at 21s. 9d.; in 1904 at 16s. 2d. Barley in 1881 sold at 31s. 11d.; in 1904 at 24s. 8d. Horses are 25 per cent. lower in price; and the profits on meat of all kinds, wool, poultry, seeds, hay and straw have diminished in recent years, except in particular localities. It makes so much difference to the profits if you get land of a particular kind of soil, or near to a railway station. I believe where people have had only small occupations, and have grown potatoes and roots during the last few years, they have done uncommonly well on soils adapted to them. Of two villages, 4 miles from where I live, one is in a prosperous state and the other bankrupt, simply because they are on two different kinds of soil. One soil is adapted for the growth of roots; the other would not produce them.

State of
Agriculture.

543

Prices and Profits.

544

The chief reason of the decline of agriculture is the low price obtained for products. From 1879 prices began to fall. There was a little revival a year or two later, but it did not last. The effect has been that cultivation has been neglected and no improvements attempted.

Cause of Change.

Rents began to go down very heavily 20 years ago, in some cases more than half; the reduction being as 10s. is to 25s. For some time the landlords would not take the reduced rent, and many farms remained on their hands, but nearly all the land is let now at some price or other. There is very little indeed in the landlords' hands. The farmers did far better with the higher rents than they do now. The cost of labour has risen just about the amount of the reduction of the rent. The value of the crop has got less and all other expenses except rent have increased.

Rents.

545 Labour.

We find it difficult to get an adequate amount of labour in our district, and it is of inferior quality. The reason is that the population has gone away. All the best men get work on the railway, and then they get away from there and you hear they are up in London on some large staffs. I am frequently asked for characters of young men by the railway officials. The quality of the labour that remains is not so good as it used to be. The old men cannot be so good as the young ones. There is very little good labour coming on to take the place of those who go away.

Wages.

The wages of the labourers have gone up. The inferior labourer of to-day is paid 20 per cent. more, and works considerably less time than the better man of 15 years ago. We employ fewer hands, but we pay just about the same in wages, as to those we have we give better wages.

Railway Rates.

We think the railway charges are too high; but the farmer is situated in such a way that he must use the railway nearest to him. He cannot carry his produce to another railway because it would cost him more. The railway rates is a question that ought to be inquired into.

Education.

Before this last Education Act came into force the County Council encouraged the instruction of labourers in different departments of agricultural work. We got grants for stacking and thatching and prizes for the best cultivated plots, but that is all done away with now. Much could be done by giving a better practical rural education. It would have the effect of making the young people more interested in the land and of keeping them on it. Instead of having pictures of griffins they might have pictures of shire horses in the school room and teach the children what a shire horse is.

546

Cottage Accommodation.

We are fairly well off for cottages where I am. I have had two new cottages built this year; there is only one occupied and I have two others empty. That shows that the people have left and there are more cottages than are really required.

Local Rates.

Local rates and taxes have increased much in late years. In February, 1898, I paid £19 8s. 5d., and this February, £34 3s. 11d. for the same farm. That is £15 difference. That includes the education rate which is about 6d. The rate 10 years ago, or before we got the remission from the Government, was just about what it is now. This remission brought it down to £19; but you see it has gradually crept up to as much as it was before we got that remission. If we had not had the relief of the Agricultural Rates Act we would have been that much worse off. I consider the rates a substantial burden on the land.

Agricultural Rates Act.

Outgoings.

My rent is about 25s. an acre; labour costs something like £2; when a farmer farms his land well he generally spends about £1 an acre on feeding stuffs, as for manure, we keep our straw back for the cattle, so that there is not so much purchased as if we sold it, but I would estimate the cost of manure at 10s. an acre, Machinery, counting wear and tear, &c., would come to 7s. an acre, and rates and taxes would be about 3s. on the land I am speaking of here.

Duties.

547

I have looked into Mr. Chamberlain's proposal to some extent. The first proposal of a 2s. duty on foreign corn will help us in lowering the taxes, because we must have taxes for good government. I really do not know what actual good it will do to the farmer except in that way. I think as a farmer I would benefit by a rather larger duty being put on flour so as to get the milling done here as much as possible. We would thus get feeding stuffs here which we want. I do not look upon these as protective duties, but as a useful means of raising revenue to carry on the government of the country. The duty of 5 per cent. which is proposed on meat will help in the same way. Live meat coming into the country is often dangerous. We are not protected from diseases as we ought to be. Personally, I should think it best to keep live stock out, but as a question of good policy for the country, it would be best to let the live stock come in. If I made any distinction between the duty on live and dead meat, I should put a rather lower duty on live than dead. Dairy produce would come under the same category. I am afraid these small duties would make produce very infinitesimally dearer. If some of the proceeds of this proposed taxation were devoted to the alleviation of Imperial taxes and rates upon land, agriculture would benefit more from that than from any rise of prices caused by these taxes. So, on the whole, I think I should be in favour of the policy advocated by Mr. Chamberlain.

Effect on Prices.

Duty on Maize.

I do not see why maize should be excluded. It is used a great deal in some districts for the feeding of cattle and so forth. It is made into bread to a certain extent, and the millers use a portion of it. I think it is quite right that if the duty was put on barley and not on maize the brewers would use nothing but maize. If it is put on one thing it should be put on the other.

548

WITNESS No. 109.

MR. JOHN WILLIAM DENNIS

(Farmer and Fruit and Potato Broker, partner of the firm of W. Dennis & Sons, of Covent Garden and King's Cross Markets, London; and Kirton, in Lincolnshire).

State of Agriculture.

I speak from experience of corn and potato growing, and as a distributor of home-grown, colonial and foreign fruit and vegetables. I farm, in conjunction with my partners, some 4,000 acres, about 1,500 potatoes, 500 grass, and the remainder corn. The district of South Lincolnshire was up to 1870 chiefly a grain-growing and cattle-raising district. From that date, in consequence of the unprofitable nature of the corn crop, potatoes were more largely grown every year; all farmers who stuck to corn-growing went to the wall, and it was only those who put part of their farms under potatoes in time that have been able to keep their heads above water. Farming profits, even in my district, which is, I think, ahead of most, are much less than they were previous to 1870. This district is a belt of particularly fertile land about 4 to 8 miles wide, skirting the bend of the Wash. There are particular spots in it, perhaps 6 miles from the Wash, where land

would be worth £60 to £70 an acre to-day, and, a few miles further on, only £10 to £20. This land is all reclaimed marsh-land, and it is a very rich loam upon silt. At Swineshead, distant from the Wash as the crow flies, perhaps 8 miles, the land is most fertile, and is largely given up to market gardening and potato raising, but only a few miles further on, through Heckington to Scredington, the hill country is reached; and whilst at Swineshead land is readily saleable at £60 and £80 an acre; at Scredington, less than 12 months ago, I refused a farm at £12 an acre. There the soil is clay and gravel. None of this extremely rich land has ever been scientifically warped like the land adjoining the Humber. There is no doubt it is warped land, but it has been warped by the natural action of the tides, which in the old days flowed over a great portion of it. On account of its fertility farmers can grow other crops, such as potatoes, market-garden produce, turnip and mustard seed, all of which require very good land to enable them to be grown profitably; but, given the best land in the kingdom, wheat could not, and cannot, be grown at a profit to-day. It is also a large cattle and sheep raising-district, but to a much smaller extent than previous to 1870. Then it was one of the districts in England in which to find good bullocks. Lincolnshire Shorthorns are a particularly good breed of cattle, and Lincolnshire long-wool sheep are famous. Previous to 1870, corn, cattle and sheep formed the entire produce of the district, but the same reason has compelled the arable farmer to leave corn-growing and the grazier to give up beef and mutton for potatoes and market gardening. During the last 30 years hundreds of acres which used to feed bullocks have been ploughed up and applied to market-gardening purposes, so that to-day South Lincolnshire, owing to its exceptional fertility of soil, is in a fairly prosperous condition. Signs are not wanting however that this prosperity may be short-lived. Potato growing, market gardening and small-seed growing, such as mustard and turnip, have been our salvation, but year by year the competition of the foreigner in these very products becomes greater.

Formerly potatoes were not exported to this country from the Continent, until prices on this side attained a height sufficient to yield the exporters a certain profit, now they are grown specially for the English market, and to that market they must go, whatever the price, because they are not wanted in their own country. The Continental farmers are in a favoured position for growing potatoes and putting them upon this market. In Germany, Holland and France, and to a small extent in Belgium, making farina or potato flour, and from it starch and also spirit, is a regular industry, and the very large, the very small, and the refuse potatoes are all used up in this way, and so they can make an exceptionally good sample for the English market, the rough stuff being worth just as much for their purposes as the medium size. The by-products of the Continental farmers' potato crop are very important and hence his competition here is rather keen. It is a very disquieting fact that foreign competition instead of being, as formerly, only problematical, is now certain, and prevents the home selling price from being fairly remunerative, and, to make matters worse, the foreigner gets into Hull and the southern markets of England cheaper than the Lincolnshire grower. They are actually dangerous competitors already and in precisely the same position as the American or Argentine wheat grower. I am informed that Holland has now taken to growing and exporting brown mustard rather extensively, with the result that mustard has been receding in price for several years, this year's price, 8s. per bushel, is quite unremunerative, and the South Lincolnshire farmers are bemoaning the necessity of having to give up growing it. In the last 2 or 3 years turnip seed has been more profitable than mustard. It fluctuates very much in price, and in crop as it depends entirely on the weather. It is all grown on the contract system, that is to say, we know what we are going to get for turnip seed per bushel before we grow it; mustard seed has to go upon the market to be sold at market price, because of the competition. Up to now there has been little—almost no foreign competition, in turnip-seed growing, but immediately our seedsmen find that it can be grown on the Continent at a lower rate, they will refuse to contract with us and turnip seed will become a speculative crop here, in competition with the foreigner. Continental land apparently has not been considered suitable for turnip growing, but it is being tried. Lincolnshire and Norfolk grow the bulk of the turnip seed in this country, so that there must be some special adaptability in the soil. At present 2 or 3 varieties are grown, but swedes are preferred because it is the best yielding and most certain crop. Personally, if I could not get a contract for swede seed, I should not take one at all. Three years ago we grew 40 acres of turnip seed which averaged £30 an acre, but the contract price was high and the yield exceptional. It is a very impoverishing crop to the land, and we have to manure very highly, so that the total cost of growing is £9 to £10 an acre. Labour averages something over £3 per acre, but we employ a lot and go in for intensive cultivation. That, probably, is considerably more than the average. Wages per week per man are about 18s. to 20s.

Foreign Competition in Potatoes.

Dutch Mustard Seed.

Turnip Seed.

The methods of cultivation in my district far excel those practised in any other country known to me. Agricultural machinery of the newest type finds there a ready market, and I have it from my father, who last year, when on a tour of inspection through the farming districts of Canada and the United States, paid a visit to the works of Messrs. Massey Harris, the big agricultural implement makers, that he found in those works not a single implement of any description which we have not in use in our own farms. The fact that the average production of grain and of roots per acre in Great Britain is largely in excess of the average in other countries suffices to show that our methods of cultivation are not in any way inferior to those of our competitors.

Methods of Cultivation.

We have no difficulties. Market gardening and the cultivation of potatoes require a considerable amount of labour, which has been generally forthcoming. In times of pressure, such as the corn and potato harvests, large numbers of Irish labourers are available, coming year by year from Ireland to work on the same farms, and the same faces may be seen at work as 10 or even 20 years ago. South Lincolnshire, when it had a very large corn harvest, used to rely mainly upon this Irish labour; now the potato harvest has taken its place, and I do not know how we should get on without Irish labour to-day. Wages have increased in recent years because of the increased demand; female labour, and that of boys and girls, is also largely in request in connection with the potato crop. Labour may be said to be prosperous, and this district surely may be taken as a good illustration of the benefits which must accrue to the labourer when conditions enable the land to be farmed at a profit. We employ children at all ages. For the potato harvest it is absolutely essential that we should have the whole of the available labour of the district, boys and girls, and it is arranged that the

Labour.

553 Labour
—continued.

schools shall be closed and that they shall have their holidays according to the labour requirements of the district. There are counties in England where that is not tolerated, even in agricultural districts, but with us the members of the education authority are mainly agriculturists and they arrange that the schools shall be closed at the time when the labour is required. This is better for everybody concerned; better for the school, better for the children, because it enables them to earn money, and certainly better for the farmer.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

There is with some exceptions sufficient cottage accommodation. In recent years cottages have increased; this appears to be the result of the farmer being able to grow a crop at a profit. Wherever farming can be made to pay, the question will solve itself.

Education.

The curriculum of schools in agricultural districts is not at all a proper one. There should be practical instruction in agricultural subjects, and in everything that pertains to agricultural life. Instead of that, it is such as to render the recipients of it dissatisfied with country life generally, and to give them a desire to earn their living in some manner less laborious, as they consider, than tilling the soil. The result is that the education given to the children of a district does not remain an asset for the benefit of that district which has paid for it, but migrates elsewhere to some town. The rate burden of education is therefore cast, to a very great extent, upon the land, whilst the educational benefit is reaped by the nation at large. Therefore education should be a charge on the National Exchequer.

554 Rents.

The fertile belt from Lynn around the bend of the Wash to Skegness, 6 to 8 miles wide and nearly 60 miles long, has been described. Just off that belt land is rented at 15s., and has a capital value of about £12 to £15 an acre, whereas in the belt there is every quality of land, up to 70s. per acre rent and down to 30s., with an average of about 50s.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent, £2 10s.; labour, £3 2s. 6d.; feeding stuffs, £1 5s.; manure, £1 8s.; machinery, on a basis of depreciation of 20 % per annum, 10s. 6d.; and rates and taxes, 13s. 4d.; or a total of £9 9s. 4d., all per acre.

Local Rates.

All local taxation has a tendency to increase. The new Education rate, which this year shows about 7d. per acre increase, will, in all probability, become greater in the near future. Local rates and taxes in South Lincolnshire are as follows: Poor rate (including County Council and Education rate), 5s. 6d. per acre; drainage rate, 2s. 5d. per acre; income tax (including Schedule A, Schedule B, and land tax), 5s. 5d. per acre. 5s. 5d. is rather a high figure, but the land has a high value. The agricultural rents there average about 50s., as before mentioned. Drainage is a special item with us, it would not be so much in most parts, for the whole of this district is reclaimed marsh-land, and it is on account of its excellent system of drainage, which involves this heavy rate, that it is such good land as it is, and it is worth all that extra.

555 Co-operation.

In market organisation there has been no change and the only co-operative movement has been brought about by the West Norfolk Farmers' Manure Company. This concern, perhaps the best and most prosperous instance of co-operation amongst farmers in this country, has been of very great benefit indeed to my district, for it is a matter of first-rate importance to the potato grower; firstly, that his manures should contain the particular chemical ingredients required, and secondly, that he should get them at as low a cost as possible. This company has reduced that cost to a minimum.

**Co-operative
Selling.**

There has been no development of co-operative selling, it is hardly practicable except among the small holders, and I am by no means sanguine about it. Co-operative selling would not be practicable among large farmers, because they can always do just as well for themselves as any corporation can do for them. There is a good deal of jealousy among the smaller growers, for each thinks his produce the best. Size and colour are the two principal factors which determine the selling price of fruit. Methods of cultivation differ totally and so will the crops, and these cannot be mixed without prejudice to the produce of the best grower, and as each thinks his own the best, no system of co-operative selling would satisfy them and they will break away from it. Co-operative marketing of small holders, and particularly the small fruit growers, is largely practised in France. French vegetables and fruit before coming here are graded by the dealer, who buys them, takes them to his own place and sorts them, so that on leaving his hands it is no longer the mixed produce of A, B and C, but uniform, and the identity of the individual grower's interest in that produce is absolutely lost. Only when small growers sell their crop outright to dealers on the spot can this method be carried out.

556 Railway Rates.

The policy of foreign governments is to assist their agriculture, and to that end pressure is brought to bear upon the railways to grant low rates of freight. These rates are particularly low on the French railways, and it is the French potato grower that has become our strongest competitor. He can bring his goods from some 200 miles inland to the port of shipment, Boulogne, Caen, Dieppe, &c., and can ship them to the southern markets of England at a cost less, in the aggregate, than the Lincolnshire grower can put his goods on the same markets, over rail distances considerably less than the French rail distances alone. Lincolnshire or any other county in the north of the Midlands is considerably handicapped as against the foreigner by the railway rates on agricultural produce. Despite the great increase in traffic, which naturally follows from the conversion of wheat-growing lands, producing about 1 ton per acre, to potato-growing lands, producing, on an average, about $7\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre, the rate to London is the same to-day as in the early eighties. From 1887 to 1903 the rates were lower, but combination of the companies stopped competition, and they have now gone back to the old rates of 1880, and by so doing have shut out the home grower from many of his own markets in the South.

I have set out in the form of a table the rates on certain French and English railways for the same class of produce and similar distances so as to bring out more clearly the great advantages which the French grower has over the English in this respect.

TABLE OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH RAILWAY RATES PER TON FOR SIMILAR DISTANCES.

	Miles.	Rate.		Miles.	Rate.
1. Ashford—London (S.E.C.R.)	56	6/9	Lille—Boulogne	55	2/11
2. Maidstone—London (S.E.R.)	41	5/10	Strazeele—Boulogne	47½	2/3
3. Biggleswade—London (G.N.R.)	41	6/3	Strazeele—Boulogne	47½	2/3
4. Biggleswade—London (G.N.R.)	41	6/3	Strazeele—Boulogne	47½	3/1
5. Worcester—London (G.W.R.)	120	14/-	Marle—Boulogne	142	6/-
6. Spalding—London (G.N.R.)	93	9/2	Le Quesnoy—Boulogne	99	5/-
7. Crowle—London (G.N.R.)	171	13/4	Le Mans—Boulogne	288	8/1

(1) For full truck-loads. (4) Onions. All other Nos.—potatoes.

(1.) English minimum rate for potatoes in full wagon-loads more than double the French rate on potatoes destined for the English market. Consigned to London they come by sea from Boulogne, but if to places south of London, then they would go by through rail route. From Dieppe *via* Newhaven on the L.B.S.C.R. the through rate for potatoes to London or to any town upon the company's system is 10s., so that it becomes a 10s. rate not only from Dieppe to London but also to Croydon, Reigate, Brighton, Hastings, or any town which the L.B.S.C.R. serves. It is said to be a common occurrence, particularly with fruit upon the S.E.R., to carry stuff to London and take it back to this very town, Ashford, at the through London rate; thus anything destined for Ashford, and coming *via* London, is carried to London and back to Ashford for the same rate as to London only. The French railways receive no subsidy from the Agricultural Board for these potatoes, on the contrary, the Government derives a substantial revenue from the railways.

558

(2.) French rate less than half the minimum English.

(3 and 4.) French rate only a little more than $\frac{1}{2}$, and in the case of onions just $\frac{1}{2}$. The English rate applies to all kinds of vegetable traffic. One of the results is that the onion growing industry in the Biggleswade district has been wiped out within 20 years. There are so few English onions grown now that it may well be said to be an extinct industry, and its place has been entirely taken by foreign onions. Railway rates are certainly one of the causes which have helped the foreigner to wipe out the English onion, though there are other factors at work as well. It is not so great a factor in onions as it is in potatoes; in a relatively high priced article like onions 5s. per ton has a less effect on price than in the case of potatoes. At the present moment potatoes will be worth about £3 and onions about £7 per ton, but that is not always the ratio. If potatoes are high and onions low, they will be approximately the same price. The English onion-grower has been killed mainly by those of Belgium and Holland, who now grow very large quantities, ship them over here at prices at which it would be simply ruinous for the English farmer to attempt to grow them. Though their onion is very inferior in quality compared with ours, the foreigner has cheaper labour and no rates and taxes compared with our own. It is by no means an uncommon thing now to see Bretons walking the country roads in Lincolnshire and elsewhere, with some onions across their shoulders—their native product.*

(5.) French rate from a large potato and onion-growing district only 43% of the English.

559

(6.) The G.E.R. and M.R. charge the same rate. The French company carries 6 miles further for slightly more than half the money.

(7.) In this case the English rate, distance for distance, is almost exactly 3 times the French.

I take the French export rates because we have not to compete with goods carried inland only. As a matter of fact, their inland rates are heavier, so that, instead of 5s. per ton, Les Quesnoy to Boulogne, it would be probably about 6s. The export rates are arranged for the purpose. A leading official of the biggest French railway, told me that in proportion as they reduced the rates for export and also for inland traffic for agricultural produce in France, so did they find that their gross and net earnings increased, the lower the rates, the bigger the traffic. The French railways certainly have power to grant lower export rates, it is a question of railway management. They do it because they find it pays them.

In Germany they grow about 8,000,000 acres of potatoes annually of which the greater part is used for manufacturing purposes—either as alcohol or flour. Their streets are lighted with potato-spirit, and lamps, similar to those in which we burn oil, are in use in the cottages, and some even of the tradesmen and the lower middle class use this spirit. There should be a good future before potato-spirit in this country if it could be freed for industrial purposes with safety to the revenue. There are many directions in which it could be utilised, *e.g.*, for the light of the poorer classes, street lighting in some of the smaller towns and villages, and as a source of motive power instead of petrol. The Emperor of Germany takes a very great interest in the production of spirit and has done his best to bring about the use of potato-spirit for motive power. The supply of petrol will be limited, and as we require more of this motive power, we must expect the price to advance. We shall want a cheaper spirit to take its place, and if potato-spirit can be freed, that ought to come in. The production of potatoes in this country would be encouraged to the full extent of the new uses found for products manufactured from them. There are many hundreds of acres in this country which would grow potatoes for manufacturing purposes, which would not grow them for market. If waste potatoes, that is to say, the diseased or abnormally large or small ones, unfit for the table, instead of having a cattle value of about 10s. a ton, as now, had an industrial value of about 25s. a ton, by so much you must reduce the cost of the article upon the market. The cost of a main product is reduced by increasing the selling value of by-products. In Great Britain we have now about 500,000 acres of potatoes. That area could be very largely increased and would increase with the use of potatoes in manufactures. An acre of potatoes in the growth and harvesting of the crop only, but including planting, costs for manual labour £3 to £4 per acre. The cost of horse labour is not taken into account. In getting up an acre of potatoes, the balance of refuse unfit to send to market as food, is very variable; there are farms this year that have 5 tons per acre of blighted potatoes, others 2, and others perhaps 1 ton. Those potatoes that are no good for eating we feed to the pigs, sometimes to the cattle. A ton of mangolds for feeding purposes is preferable to a ton of potatoes, at any rate for cattle.

Industrial Alcohol.

560

* On board the "Hilda," wrecked off St. Malo, there were 80 Bretons with nearly £4,000 between them. —Standard, 21st Nov., 1905.

561 Beet Sugar.

The existing tax, or some portion of it, ought to be left on sugar, for the purpose of promoting the sugar industry in this country. There is no reason whatever why, if the British farmer could rely upon the protection of the sugar tax, and the sugar would not be excised, large tracts of wheat land in this country should not be given up to sugar production. The United States, some 10 or 12 years ago produced no sugar at all, now they are producing considerable quantities, and during the last 6 years, have put up no less than 42 sugar factories. The same might be done here, and could be done, if we had a benevolent Board of Agriculture, as they have in the United States—with some money to spend, and not afraid to spend it, for the benefit of the particular industry over which it has charge. Much sunshine is not necessary. I have, myself, made the experiment of growing sugar beet, and even in the year 1902, which was not so wet a year as 1903, but still comparatively wet, grew it with a little above the German average of saccharine properties. If they can do it, why cannot we? This country might produce its own sugar, but that would entail growing sugar beet on the existing wheat lands. All the pastures would not grow beet. There is a great deal of land now under what is called pasture, which would be really more correctly described as under weeds, that would not grow it, nor will too heavy land grow beet; clay soil is not suitable. The beet crop would be a question of manuring, like the mangold crop, and scientific handling. A good crop of beet weighs about 20 tons to the acre. The tops of the beet are left on the land in Germany, and ploughed in as green manure. There is not very much in it, but there would be something. The consumption of sugar in this country is $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons a year, which at the normal price of sugar, of £10 a ton (it is now £14 or £15) means £15,000,000 per annum. The whole of this money at the present time is sent out of this country, and could be kept in it. To establish the sugar crop in this country needs money. To put the money down requires confidence, and that confidence must come from a knowledge on the part of the grower that he will not be subjected, in the initial stages, to the fierce competition of an industry which has now arrived at almost the acme of perfection on the Continent. The condition precedent to establishing the sugar industry here, is the retention of any rate not less than 50 % of the existing import duty. That would be a protection of about £2 a ton, further, British sugar must be free from excise. Could it be shown that an industry of this nature could be established in this country, and with largely beneficial results coming therefrom, the Government ought to make some grant to establish it, but, failing that, I am of opinion that there would be private enterprise sufficient to put down certain plants. I myself see no difficulty in getting together a body of 50 farmers in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, who would put down £1,000 apiece to build a factory and who, at the same time, would enter into an undertaking to grow, and supply that factory with, the necessary quantity of beet. I do not think I should have any difficulty in securing the sum needed for the establishment of one factory at any rate. What other districts might do, I cannot say, but with one factory running as an object lesson, and paying well, there would be plenty of capital forthcoming. To raise a factory and put in the necessary machinery would cost about £50,000. That would take the produce of a great many acres of land. £1 a ton in America and Germany is the price to the farmers for their beet at the factory. Last year the American farmers drew from the sugar factories some £2,000,000 sterling, yet the industry is only in its infancy there; a few years hence they expect to pocket nearly 10 times as much. These facts will be found in an article on the relation of sugar beets to general farming written by Mr. C. L. Townsend of the Bureau of Plant Industry at Washington. The by-product is of very great value. It is said that, for turning into beef, it is almost of as much value after extraction of the sugar as before, but of this I have no practical experience. It is further said that since sugar has been so largely manufactured in Germany, their production of beef has been very largely increased.

563

Employment.

The labour required for an acre of beet would be greater than for mangolds. The beet employs a lot of labour during its period of growth. The plants would have to be gone over by hand and singled, because they must grow separately, but the great benefit to the labour of the country would be in providing winter labour; outdoor labour in summer, indoor labour in winter in the factories; therefore there would be continual employment for the labour in the district, and the article referred to, says: "The cost of labour in the American sugar beet districts, during the past few years has advanced from 25 to 50 %." It will not be agricultural labour in winter, but the sugar factory must be very near to the place where the beet is produced, otherwise the cost of carriage would be too great; there must be easy access, within a very short radius, to the beet grown to supply it, and if the factory were there, it would be available as a source of winter labour for the agricultural population. The beet has to be washed and cleaned, and to go through various processes. The machinery requires attendance, which would be more scientific than growing the beet in the field, but there is no reason why the agricultural labourer should not become sufficiently adaptive to be able to do that work in winter.

564

Effect of Duties on Prices.

2s. a quarter duty would not raise the selling price of wheat in this country. So long as the Argentine Republic, Russia and the United States have a large surplus of wheat, they must continue to ship it to this, the only market open to them, and, in order to get into this market, they will pay the tax. The price of oats and barley will not rise to the full extent of the tax. Imports of these two cereals are largely increasing, and the foreign shipper should to a large extent pay the tax upon these also. The proposed duty on flour will be beneficial, by causing more wheat to be milled at home, keeping the offals for use here, and by employing more labour; secondly, it would gradually bring down the price of bran and offals for feeding purposes (and these articles we consume rather largely).

Preference.

Colonial preference will have the effect of opening up for cultivation large tracts of virgin soil in Canada, with the result that further Canadian sources of supply must be added to those already existing upon this market, and it seems certain that the wheat supply will be so large that prices must fall.

Maize.

Maize should not be exempted from the tax. It enters largely into competition with growers of oats, feeding barleys, and rough wheat in this country, and is used in brewing. From a feeding point of view maize is of very low value. Maize should not be fed to horses at all. We work something like 140 horses, and my father insists that no maize shall be given to them, but oats and beans only.

Fruit.

A 5 % tax upon fruit and vegetables would not have the slightest effect in restricting foreign imports, and would not raise prices here. Fruit and vegetables are now in such abundant supply, and are so cheap, that a tax of 10 % could be imposed without in any way restricting importations, and certainly without the price to the consumer being in any way altered.

The chief competition against British beef arises from the retailers selling foreign home-killed beef as British beef. If a 5 % tax were put on foreign home-killed meat, by so much would it probably raise the price of British meat.

Meat.

565

There is no reason for the exemption of bacon. The consumers of bacon have changed entirely within the last 15 or 20 years, it is no longer a poor man's food, as it used to be. The great bulk of the bacon is now consumed by the middle and wealthier classes, or at any rate by those classes who can afford, and probably well afford, to pay an increased price for it, if that were the result of the tax.

Bacon.

We expect on an average from each corn crop, in quarters per acre, barley 5 to 6; wheat 5; oats 7 to 9; and beans and peas from 4 to 5. The addition to the profits on our farm from a rise of 1s. a quarter in the price of each kind of corn would be about £500 a year, but I do not think we shall get that rise. We feed and sell in a year about 100 beasts; of those we breed $\frac{2}{3}$ and buy $\frac{1}{3}$. A rise of 5 % in the price of beef would add from £120 to £130 per annum to our profits. We keep and sell, one year with another, 500 sheep. A rise of 5 % in the price of mutton would add £50 to £65 a year to our profits. The total profits which might be expected from the increased prices suggested on all the above-mentioned articles would come to about £685 per year in my case.

Effect on Farm Profits.

A tax upon manufactures must increase the demand for labour, and therefore make labour dearer. If the wages of the artisan rise, so must the wages of the agricultural labourer. They will also rise if, and when, any means are discovered, which will have the effect of increasing the selling price of the farmers' produce, and thus make it profitable for him to grow. My own district furnishes a striking example of this. The farm labourer there earns 16s. to 20s. per week, is in full employment, and his wife and children have also full employment for about 6 months in the year at wages averaging 9s. to 12s. per week for the women, and from 6s. to 10s. per week for the boys and girls, whilst only 30 miles to the east, in Norfolk, where they are restricted to the ordinary four-course rotation, corn and roots—corn and turnips—the wage to-day is only 12s. to 14s. per week. Where the farmer has a paying crop, where his land is such as to enable him to grow something other than corn, which does not pay, then the price of labour, as compared with that district where he can grow corn only, is as 18s. to 13s., which surely is an argument in favour of making the agricultural land of this country grow a paying crop. There are a good many other places in the east of England, like the fens-lands in Cambridgeshire, which could grow vegetables and all kinds of produce of very high quality if they changed their crops.

Effect on Labour.

566

The only benefit to the home wheat grower would appear to lie in the allocation of the import duties. These duties should form a fund for the granting of a bounty to agriculture in the shape of a direct payment for all home-grown wheat produced, or (and preferably), the removal of all rates and taxes upon agricultural land. If something in this direction is not done it would seem probable that the last state of the farmer, and the wheat grower especially, will be worse than the first. Whilst the duties proposed are a step in the right direction, and should be welcomed by all farmers, the immediate advantage will be very small, unless the taxes be allocated to ridding the land of its many burdens; that is to say, there is no advantage except in regard to the allocation of the money raised.

Bounties.

567

WITNESS No. 110.

MR. GEORGE FISKE

(Farmer, Thorn-bush, Bramford, Ipswich, representing the East Suffolk Chamber of Agriculture).

My views do not agree with those of all the members of our Chamber, but I have full liberty to express any I please.

I farm about 1,000 acres myself, and my sons another 1,000; 400 acres grass, the rest nearly all arable, growing corn and keeping stock.

Agriculture in my district is very much depressed. The depression began from 1882 to 1884, and it applies to all branches more or less, with the exception of milk producing.

State of Agriculture

Living near a big town (Ipswich) we are large milk producers and the demand has increased considerably since I began to keep cows. Milk is about the same price as 20 or 30 years ago; there is very little difference between the wholesale price in London now and then, and I do not think it was ever less. Many have given it up because it does not pay, the milking and everything costing more than 10 or 20 years ago.

Milk.

568

I started with perhaps 6 cows. Now I and my sons have nearer 200; we have plenty of competition, still I think milk is perhaps more remunerative than any other branch of my farming. We are protected in that it is the only thing that the foreigner cannot at present send us in any quantity. The condensed milk trade does not affect us very much.

Mine is especially wheat and barley land. Wheat is only about half the price it used to be; it costs much more to grow, and the yield per acre is less because we cannot afford to farm so highly, but we grow wheat because we want straw badly. Even at the low price it is almost as good as growing oats.

Wheat.

We are rather conveniently situated for a market.

Barley I consider quite as important a crop as wheat. We suffer now from the immense quantity of inferior foreign barley malted in place of our home grown. Many maltings in my neighbourhood use foreign barley almost entirely. We do not grow so much per acre as we used to do; nor is the land kept so clean, and in so good a condition. Quality varies entirely with the season. In my earlier days it was a little better: because where land is farmed very highly for barley, and very heavily sheep fed, the quality is inferior and

Barley.

569 **Barley**
—continued.

there is now more barley put after wheat, a thing never done in my early days. High farming gives a bigger crop, but not so good for malting purposes. We grow more oats than we used; but much of the land I farm is more adapted to wheat than to oats. Barley has taken the place of wheat to a certain extent.

The change in agriculture began between 1884 and 1885, and has continued more or less ever since. The prices of nearly everything we have to sell have fallen and in consequence land is neglected and going out of cultivation. We do not put as much into the land as formerly.

Profits in my district have diminished in recent years very considerably, owing to low prices and the increased cost of labour.

Labour.

There is a less supply of labour and the quality is bad. Latterly more has been obtainable, but I have hardly a young man now between 17 and 35. The young men without exception go away to other employment for higher wages and change. We get principally the old, the stupid and the delicate ones. With better times we could afford to pay higher wages and get a better class of man. We do not employ much less labour, we pay more wages, get less work for the money, and much necessary work goes undone.

Wages average about 2s. a week higher as compared with 30 to 40 years ago. They vary now from 15s. to 16s. besides harvest and piece work. We give few extras, only beer in busy times. These figures probably hold for several miles round Ipswich and also in Norfolk. Most of my horse-men and all my stock men get 15s. a week and their house-rent free. The milk men get more.

570

Any man in my neighbourhood can have an allotment if he wishes for one. We very seldom plant the allotments for our labourers. Some do their allotments well, and some do not care about the land, and have given up the allotments that I let them have. Labourers have got to like to live without exerting themselves. Wheat at 20s. a coomb would be an inducement for them to grow an eighth of an acre each year.

Cottages.

Cottages are scarcer and very bad. The large rich landowners keep up their cottages and build new ones; but much of the land in our county is in the hands of small owners, who cannot afford to spend the necessary money. Many of the buildings are very poor, with cottages in about the same condition to-day as 30 or 40 years ago. The bulk of them ought to be rebuilt altogether, but the land is not worth it. Plenty of land about us would sell for no more than the buildings and the house cost. This is one of the reasons why labour is not so satisfactory as it used to be. If we advertise for a good man from a distance, he will not have the old-fashioned cottage. Now-a-days a man will not live in a cottage that would have satisfied him 40 years ago.

Education.

The County Council has done a good deal in agricultural education in our neighbourhood in the last 4 or 5 years. We have had experimental farm plots, which are very useful indeed; also horticultural classes and classes for dairy work and we give scholarships. We intend to try and encourage the school boys to take some interest in agriculture and learn the use of tools by giving school gardens.

571 **Railway Rates.**

I have no great complaint to make about railway rates. We cannot expect the same rate for small quantities as for whole train loads of foreign goods. The G.E.R. do the best they can for agriculturists.

I live not far away, and I have found that at Harwich there are many hundreds of consignments of only from 5 cwt. to 50 cwt., but they are made up into big loads. I refer more to vegetables and meat, dairy produce, and small things. They may be separate consignments from different consignors, but they are got together. I myself this last summer spent a whole afternoon and evening seeing a ship loaded in Holland. I saw the goods come to England and whole train loads going away to London, Manchester, Birmingham and other places.

Rates.

Rates are quite double what they were. The assessable value of the land has fallen very considerably in the last 30 or 40 years. My rates now average about 4s. 6d. to 5s. in the £, that is the whole rate without deduction. Forty years ago they would not have been above 2s. The Education Act has added about 6d. in the £. Where there was a School Board it is felt less than where there was none.

Agricultural Rates Act.

What we should do without the Agricultural Rates Act I do not quite know. We get the full advantage of it. I do not know a single landlord who has appropriated any of it, and I have had to do with a good many farms.

Co-operation.

There have been no changes in my district in market organisation. A Co-operative Society has been started. It will do good with the small farmers, possibly with dairy produce, eggs and poultry, and the like; but I doubt if they could buy and sell my stock or corn for me or other farmers in my position to advantage.

572

Foreign Methods.

I have been abroad myself, and wherever I have been I have found that the land is far better cultivated and most decidedly cleaner than it is here at present. In this respect, cultivation in this country has very much deteriorated indeed, because it does not pay. In foreign countries labour is cheaper, with the further advantage of the women and children working in all branches of agriculture; they can thus compete with us successfully.

Duties.

I firmly believe in the principle of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. I understand them to be a 2s. duty on all corn, except maize, that from the Colonies to be free. It would make farming better here; the landlord would be able to get a little more for rent as the effect of all the duties combined; and so would be able to help his tenants with better cottages and buildings; they would be able to pay better wages.

A rise in the price of corn of 2s. would not enable him to alter the rent, but the whole country, agriculture and all, would be more prosperous if these duties were imposed. It would not make much difference in our methods, but the derelict land would again be brought into cultivation.

I would prefer a rather larger duty than 2s. a quarter on imported wheat. But I favour a heavier duty on flour than on wheat. I think if we could make 30s. more per acre than we have done the last two years that we should plant $\frac{1}{4}$ of the arable, as we used to do; even wheat is a little better now than it was 7 or 8 years ago. A great deal of land is capable of growing double what it does now and if the farmer had

more confidence he would undoubtedly put more land under the plough, and with better prices, we should see more labour employed, and better wages. A 2s. duty would not raise the price of corn much, nor would it stop importation, but if we get 1s. more let the foreigner send all he likes. The extra revenue could be used to reduce our taxes.

A heavy duty on flour would secure the offals for us here. The more grain that comes in the more work for the miller, and the more feeding stuff we shall have.

Instead of only admitting maize free, all feeding stuffs ought to be free. All barley for malting should pay a duty, but feeding barley should come free.

The difficulty of distinguishing between feeding and malting barley might be got over if foreign feeding barley came over as meal. The price of foreign feeding stuffs must not be raised more than we can help.

I feed maize very largely, and I think it is good for cattle and pigs, though too dry and hard by itself. I prefer barley or bran or offal mixed with it; but I have kept 30 or 40 cart-horses for year after year on nothing but maize as corn. They are eating oats now because oats are very cheap. We use some foreign barley, but there are many other things besides barley; there are foreign peas, lentils and foreign seeds. A 2s. tax, with Colonial wheat free, might very slightly raise the price of bread.

Maize.

WITNESS No. 111.

MR. WILLIAM GEORGE

(Farmer, Gayton, near Blisworth, Northants).

I farm 550 acres, of which 330 are pasture, 130 under corn, 45 clover, 40 roots and 5 potatoes. My family has occupied this farm for 200 years—myself 30 years. A lease, dated 1730, was for 5 years; for the last 50 the tenancy has been annual (Lady Day entry and 6 months' notice); I shall not go as long as I can pay my rent.

We are greatly dependent on the seasons and it is 3 years since we have had a decent year. 1904-5 has been exceptionally bad. Barley is not first-rate; clover is very good where grown from English seed; roots are under average in quantity and quality; they were good in 1903. Cows have not thriven well or given so much milk, and cattle generally did not put on flesh in 1904. Sheep have done exceedingly well this year (1904), but there has been a much less supply of sheep in the country, partly owing to diminished importation and partly because bad times have compelled the farmers to raise money by selling their sheep; at the same time sheep have diminished all over the world, and this may account for the improved price. Corn is much less remunerative, the yield has been less and barley has fallen. The last 2 or 3 years have been against growing good samples and, outside the very best, prices are very variable. Ordinary samples have not been in demand largely owing to the use of substitutes by brewers. The free mash-tub has been no advantage to farmers. I contract to grow a certain quantity of barley for Messrs. Webb, and some years ago I made 56s. for nearly 100 quarters for seed. The highest average for a year would be 44s. I have taken as low as 20s. for discoloured barley. I only grow oats for my own consumption. I grow wheat almost entirely for the sake of the straw and for rotation; one cannot grow barley always. Wheat has been steadily declining: 56s. 9d. per quarter in 1877, 22s. 10d. in 1894; since then the average is about 27s. Barley has steadily fallen from 44s. 11d. per quarter in 1874 to 21s. 10d. in 1904 (average to August). Oats were 28s. 10d. against 16s. 4d. realised for harvest 1903. A few years ago I made 60s. on some wheat, this year the highest price was 32s. The lowest I have ever sold at was 19s. Barley and wheat have fallen heavily in price, owing, in the case of wheat, to foreign competition, and in the case of barley to the fact that substitutes are used in brewing, although there is more barley imported. The ploughed part of my farm is on high, dryish land, so that it would not make good pasture. I shall not grow less wheat and barley this year, but undoubtedly there will be much less barley sown if prices continue to fall. Throwing the land into grass, and letting it take its chance, is the only alternative.

State of
Agriculture.

The store stock has been a good trade; buyers do not complain much about the price of stores, but they complain when selling them out when they are getting fat. Cattle only did well on the very best lands last year, and there was such a glut in the autumn that they did not pay for summer keep. I have sent milk to London regularly for many years. The price has fallen in the last 2 or 3 and is still falling; there are more people in the business. Sterilisation enables milk to be kept much better, and large quantities of desiccated milk come over from the Argentine in cake and powder, and the export is increasing; it is very palatable and tastes like cooked or sterilised milk. There is no branch of farming of which I can speak cheerfully at the present time, and the bad conditions have existed for some years. I attribute the change in the condition of agriculture in almost every case to increased foreign supply.

Stores.

Milk.

The supply of labour is fair, but the quality not so good as years ago—we do not get so much work per man. I employ the same number all the year round and need few or no extra hands in harvest. The men stay with me; my wagoner has been with us 40 years, and I have some young fellows of 23-25 who have never worked for anyone else. I have no labour difficulties. My father used to employ 25 Irish reapers, 20 years ago, but machinery rendered them unnecessary. Lincolnshire uses Irish labour still because the farmers there are not all-round employers.

Labour.

Wages have risen, but we have not felt the rise so much as outlying districts, as, being close to Northampton and having large ironstone works in the village, we have been used to pay more money. My ordinary labourers get 2s. 6d. a day. Stockmen and skilled labour more.

Wages.

If men knew more of the land, what it required in the shape of manure, what was good for the various crops, and what this manure was made of, it would be a very great help to farmers. Whether it would do to send a man down, as is done in Denmark, to instruct the farmer, is another matter; that knowledge can only

Education.

577 **Education**
--continued.

be had by paying for it now. Much of the technical education given in British schools to the poorer people is worthless, but if there were schools that would help farmers and labourers' sons in agricultural chemistry it would be a very great advantage. Any sensible farmer would welcome some extra assistance in training and chemical knowledge, because it must be a great help to him. Facilities are given in the form of scholarships to farmers' sons to go to universities from school, but it is expensive, and a boy who is smart at books can rarely be kept on the land. Education should be more accessible, and in agricultural chemistry especially. At present the chief effect of agricultural education has been to add to the rates very materially, with no direct benefit whatever.

Local Rates.

Local rates are increasing steadily, the rise being due in most villages to the Education Act, but there are other reasons. Some years ago the qualification for a Guardian of the Poor was reduced. I have been a Guardian now for many years, and there are a certain number of men on the Board who pay little or nothing in rates, but are always ready to spend money and be generous at other people's expense. Much outdoor relief is given that should not be given at all. Next, the roads are kept better; motor-car proprietors have all been very anxious for better roads and there has been a great tendency to improve them of late years. We do not grudge the expense very much, for there is a great call for good roads.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates are very unfair as regards potatoes; on milk they are almost prohibitive, being about $\frac{1}{2}$ of actual value, and then conveyed at owner's risk. The companies take no care whatever of the milk, and object very strongly to locked churns, indeed, will not allow them. As an example of unfairness: the rate from Boston to Blisworth, 80 miles, is nearly 20s. per ton. This was for a 3-ton lot, so I did not get the benefit of the 4-ton rate, but the rate for 4 tons, Boston to London, 110 miles, is 9s. 2d. only, and the 3-ton rate about 11s. 4d. The cross-country rates are almost prohibitive. I tried to get a special rate and failed. Again, Blisworth to London, 60 miles, 4-ton rate 8s. 4d.; under 2 tons 16s. 1d. There should be fresh legislation as to the Railway Rates Act, because the way foreign produce is carried by the trunk lines to London is most unfair. A committee is wanted to enquire into preferential rates and into the question of railway rates in this country generally.

Agricultural Rates.

The Agricultural Rates Act was a very great boon indeed. The farmer certainly reaped the chief benefit; it made a great difference in the rates. The landlords have not tried to take advantage of it for themselves. I never heard of any case.

Co-operation.

Very little has been done in our district in market organisation. A club or two have been started for butchers' supply, &c., but they have not answered.

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain has not put enough on. A duty, however small, upon corn and meat will have a tendency to improve prices; this will encourage cultivation and cattle rearing, give more employment to labourers and increase their spending power, keep them from already crowded towns, and save the rates. The duty paid by foreign countries would bring a very considerable revenue, which might be used in payment of Old Age Pensions. The cost of living would not be increased as a reduction in other duties would take place.

579 **Effect on Consumer.**

The consumer will not pay much of this 2s. a quarter. A quarter of wheat makes 130 loaves, the duty thus amounts to a 1d. a week for a family of 5, or 1s. a head per annum, even if they pay all. Bread now is 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and when wheat was 60s. it was only 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d., and last year bread was 5d. when wheat was 28s. a quarter. So that 2s. duty a quarter will not raise the price of bread to the consumer; the sender will pay it. I send sheep to Northampton market; there is a toll (duty we may call it), which the auctioneers deduct from the cheque. I pay that toll. It does not make the slightest difference to the consumer whether my sheep make 56s. 6d. or 56s. A 2s. increase in the price of corn would mean perhaps £50 a year to me, but on a 550-acre farm like mine the difference between a 1s. and a 2s. duty on wheat would be very trifling.

Preference.

Preferential arrangements between the Colonies and this country would not cause me to change my cultivation, but with an increase in the price of corn, poor pastures would be ploughed up for corn-growing and more people would stay upon the land and be prosperous and contented. I should object to the admission of Canadian stores. Farmers would oppose it. We do not want any risk of disease.

Effect on Labour.

If the farmer made any profit out of the duty, the labourer would get his share. One would employ more labour, and wages will be increased by the law of supply and demand.

WITNESS No. 112.

MR. GEORGE GOOD

(Farmer, Gussage St. Michael, Salisbury; representing the Blandford Farmers' Club).

I farm 1,135 acres in Dorsetshire, about 500 arable, 432 pasture and 203 down. The grass land has been laid down at various times, from 6 to 16 years ago, since the depression set in.

State of Agriculture.

Agriculture is in a very congested state indeed, and the future looks very gloomy. A great deal of corn land has gone out of cultivation owing to the low prices. Most of the farmers who have capital are giving up their farms, and the land is being taken up by men in a smaller way who have very little capital, which, of course, means less employment of labour and less production. This change has been caused by the fall in prices owing to the free importation of foreign corn, meat and dairy produce. There are no other causes.

Labour.

We had some difficulties with labour; a few years ago it was rather short, but at present it is more plentiful. The quality has very much deteriorated. This can be attributed to several causes. When there was a demand for labour the employers were not quite so particular and so workmen have become rather careless. The children are kept at school now until they are 14, and when they come on the farms they are very careless and indifferent. The labourers, boys and men, as a rule, take less interest in their agricultural work than they

used to do. I have never considered the cause of this, but it may be that they are very independent owing to the short supply of labour. They could do the work much better than formerly if they chose, because they have better appliances than they had years ago. The boys are not so well taught in a great many cases. When they come out of school at the age of 14, they know a great deal more about many things than they did formerly, but they know less about their agricultural work, and the unfortunate part of it is they will not be told, or when they are told they will not give any attention.

The rate of wages has increased from 15 % to 20 % during the last 30 years.

Railway rates do not affect me very much. The use of traction engines and motor power makes a great difference. I do not pay the railway companies so much by 80 %, because I use so much steam. I find that the cheapest thing.

A little has been done with regard to the development of co-operation in the purchasing of manures and feeding stuffs and it has worked very well. It helps us to keep a more regular price. I take advantage of it myself and find it enables me to get a good article at a fair market price. On the whole my experience would teach me to speak favourably of it. It would be better for the country generally, if it were more developed.

Cottage accommodation is fairly good. I farm principally on my own land and much as I should like to give better accommodation, as I feel the necessity for it, I cannot do it at the present price of things. It is like sinking so much capital. I am not alone in that respect I know.

My rent is 9s. 2½d. per acre, labour 15s. 10½d., feeding stuffs 16s. 6½d., manure 1s. 7d., machinery (implements and repairs) 5s. 7½d., rates and taxes 1s. 1½d.

We have derived a little assistance from the Agricultural Rates Act. The full advantage of the Act has gone into the pocket of the tenant farmer. I have not heard one case where rent has been increased on that account.

A 2s. duty on corn would do no good. We had evidence of that with the 1s. registration duty. I do not mean to say it would not be an advantage, as of course it would bring in something to the revenue. I do not oppose it on that account, but as far as the agriculturist is concerned it would not be of any use. It would not be fair to the agriculturist to have the duty higher on flour than wheat. The effect would be to keep out the flour and to bring the grain in instead, and of that I do not quite approve. Only the miller and his employé would benefit. A duty on flour would not benefit the agriculturist one farthing. There must be something done in the near future for the agriculturist, and now the miller is certainly on his side; but if he and his employé are satisfied by the duty on flour we shall lose their help. It is no use the farmer advocating a thing which is certainly against him. I am doubtful whether a proportionately larger duty on flour would increase the quantity of offals and enable them to be produced at a cheaper price than at present, because, when the registration duty was put on the price of offals was not reduced and the greater part went to Denmark and Sweden. I imagine they gave a better price. The feeder was not benefited very much then and I look upon that as a test case. I do not feed much offals while the grain is at this very low price. I find it better to use the corn grown on the farm, grinding it myself, or feeding it whole. The 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would be a little advantage, certainly. Raw material ought to be taxed in the same proportion as manufactured goods. A manufactured article is of more value than a thing in the raw state, and the duty should be a little higher. If there were a duty put on manufactured goods, and only a duty of 2s. a sack on corn, and all things coming in free from our Colonies, the agriculturist would be in a worse state in 5 years' time than he is at the present day. I should not put a duty on raw cotton because that is not produced in this country. I limit my ideas of taxation of raw material to that producible here. There are certain things we cannot produce, such as rice, tea, coffee, and currants. Maize can be produced, so I leave that an open question. Wool is one of the raw materials that I should wish to see taxed. The same with hops. What I want to see is general protection all round. In its present form I should be opposed to the general policy. I would much rather things remain as they are—it would be to the benefit of the rural districts. The Colonies should be taxed as well as foreign countries but a preference might be given to the Colonies on a sliding scale. I want to support our Colonies, certainly, but it is scarcely wise to benefit them to the injury of those at home. The fact of Colonial produce coming in free would make a very great difference, because directly the Colonies have a free market (of course they have a free market now, but they will have a free market then and other countries would have to pay, we will say, a 2s. duty) that would be an incentive to them to produce more grain and cattle, and we should have these coming in in larger quantities than we have ever had before. The ruin of the agricultural districts would be produced by the keener and more increased competition of the Colonies and our having to pay for more manufactured goods, without duties sufficiently large to compensate our agricultural home-grown produce. And we should not be able to increase our rate of wages because our produce would realise very little more. The special competition from the Colonies with the agricultural producer in this country of which I have most apprehension is in all kinds of grain, hops, meat, and wool. Wool only makes very little more now than half as much as it did some few years ago.

Wages.

Motor Power.

Co-operation.

Cottage
Accommodation.Annual
Outgoings.Agricultural
Rates Act.

Duties.

Effect on Offals.

Effect on Meat.
Raw Material.

Preference.

Colonial
Competition.

WITNESS No. 113.

MR. P. R. GRAY
(Farmer, Spring Lodge, Athy).

I farm 145 Irish acres, entirely tillage.

I have entirely changed my mode of cropping in the last 10 years or so. Formerly I used a rotation of roots, barley, 2 years grass, and barley again, now I have only half the root crop because I could not get fattening State of
Agriculture.

585 State of ^{VI}
Agriculture
—continued.

cattle to pay. For several years I never grazed anything on the farm and have no grazing whatever. I buy cattle, 3 years old or so, to fatten in the month of October; they get turnips and straw, and begin with 3 lbs. of cake and finish up with from 6 to 8. It is 5 months or so before they are fat, and when sold they hardly pay the bill for cake after deducting ingoing price. That was the reason I changed to barley-growing. 25 or 30 years ago I got 34s. to 36s. per qr. now I sell at 29s. The effect of this change of price has been a considerable restriction of tillage, though this is naturally a tillage neighbourhood and not well suited to grass.

Barley-growing.

Now I grow nearly twice the amount of barley I used to, and have one field that has grown barley for 10 years in succession. I took great interest in Sir J. B. Lawes' experiments and, after 30 years of barley-growing, thought I might repeat them. A field of 12 Irish acres (18 Eng.) has had no farmyard manure for 16 years and has yielded 3 crops of hay and 13 of barley, and the 17th crop (barley) is equal, if not superior, to the others. The produce is always carefully weighed and last year the yield was nearly 16 barrels (of 16 stone) of saleable corn and one barrel of light corn per Irish acre, i.e., 5 qrs. per English or 8 qrs. per Irish acre. I have all the most recent implements and though I have not much land I take as much out of it as possible. I till it at once, after the corn is removed, and get a smooth surface. Then the annual weeds spring up, and I plough them in. In growing the same crop so many years in succession I must of necessity use large quantities of artificial manure; I use the following mixture: 1½ cwt. sulphate ammonia, 3 kainit and 4½ super-phosphate. This year I used nearly 9 cwt. to the acre, last year 8 and the year before 7, against 6 cwt. in previous years. The 8 cwt. last year proved so successful that I used more this year.

586

Provided the straw is strong enough not to fall, the more manure you give, in my experience, the better, but I cannot grow barley on all my fields. The potato ground generally gets a top-dressing of potash and super-phosphate. Then I sow it down with as good grass-seed as I can get, and leave it in grass for 4 years, top dressing and mowing it every year and eating off the aftermath with sheep; they get nothing else. For barley I top-dress with sulphate of ammonia, kainit and super-phosphate; for grass with nitrate of soda, kainit and super-phosphate. Mine is barley land naturally and grows good malting barley. Mangolds are not sufficiently appreciated as a food for farm horses, I use them considerably and with success. Nearly double the weight per acre of mangolds can be grown, as against turnips, by the use of artificial manure.

Canadian Stores.

I propose continuing my present system of cultivation unless Canadian stores are re-admitted. That would open up the country to tillage more than anything else. At present the tillage farmer who has no grazing land, has to buy cattle in October; the custom is to buy by live weight. For an animal in good condition he will have to pay 27s. or 28s. per cwt. If put into the stall, and fed with cake, turnips and straw, in 2 months a beast will not weigh as much as when he went in, and, after 3 or 4 months' feeding, if the cake bill is added to the ingoing price, there is nothing for your turnips and straw except the manure heap. That does not pay. Canadian stores coming in would reduce the price of store cattle 25%. So that instead of paying, as now, £15 per head for cattle going in, a similar animal could be had for £12. Prohibition of stores is protecting only one industry, and letting everything else in free; protecting the raw material that the tillage farmer wants so much and allowing the manufactured article in free of duty. It is not for the benefit of the tillage farmer alone, nor of the country at large. It would bring out a rural population and give employment. True we suffered terribly for many years from cattle disease, and that is the argument always brought forward against Canadian stores, but there is no disease now. It would be a serious blow to the cattle raising industry if the capital value of all stock in Ireland were reduced 25%, as it would be for a few years until the new system of fattening was generally adopted, but if beef were raised in price breeders would fatten their cattle instead of selling them as stores. Tillage would be very largely increased by admitting store cattle. In my case I should go back to my methods of 25 years ago. Instead of having 1 field of green crop, I should have 2. That would give extra employment and I should fatten double the amount of cattle that I feed now. I merely feed a few cattle for the sake of having some manure to grow turnips. I should use maize. I grow nothing but barley because I can grow as many barrels of barley as I can of oats, and use light barley for feeding. The farm has paid well enough as to barley-growing, but I have no money in my pocket. I have no complaint as to the condition of agriculture except with regard to stall-feeding.

587

Labour and Wages.

I have no complaint to make of the supply of labour. I have a permanent staff—some men have been with me 20 years. My men have constant employment, and I pay them for wet days and for holidays; they go to church and chapel on holidays, and I never stop anything for that. 25 years ago their wages used to be 9s. weekly and £1 after harvest, but they have risen gradually since then. The present wage is 11s. weekly, £1 after hay-harvest and £2 after corn-harvest.

588

Cottage Accommodation.

There is plenty of cottage accommodation in our district and they are still increasing it as required. If an acre of land or half an acre is taken off my farm I am paid for it. The place belongs to the Urban authority but I have no claim upon it nor upon the tenant; if he chooses to work on a canal or railway instead of for me he is free to do so. These Acts were introduced undoubtedly with the view of providing accommodation for the labourers upon the land adjacent to their cottages, but they cannot be compelled to work for a particular individual. I do not understand the complaints that are made on this score, I have never had any trouble with the labourers. Though the local rates, out of which these cottages are built, may be chiefly paid by the farmers, still the canal and railway shareholders pay rates also and have some right to consideration. I would advocate the development of small holdings of 1 or 2 acres. The habit of most of the farmers in our neighbourhood is, where they have a man working for them, to plough his bit of land, and there is no fear of his running away to a railway or a canal company. I never lose by lending a man a pair of horses for a day. I have 5 men employed regularly, and 2 extra occasionally. If the man had 3 acres and a cow, the cow would nearly graze the 3 acres, and he would not have anything to do on his holding; he would work—and for the man he knows best.

My annual outgoings are: Rent 18s. per Irish acre, labour 35s., feeding stuffs 10s., manure 28s., machinery, &c., 4s., rates and taxes 3s. **Annual Outgoings.** 589

The duties proposed by Mr. Chamberlain are a move in the right direction, but 1s. a barrel is very little, it should be a little more as it would not put much on the price of the loaf, and most of the farmers, if they were getting £1 an acre more for their barley, would not grudge giving the labourer an extra 1s. a week. Agriculture is Ireland's greatest industry and should get more encouragement so as to keep a rural population in the country. **Duties.**

WITNESS No. 114.

MR. JOHN GREENHILL

(Managing Director of the Ulster Chemical Manure Company, Limited, Londonderry, and Past President of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce).

A few years ago I was Chairman of the Committee, composed of delegates from the Municipal Corporation of Belfast, delegates from the Harbour Board, and Belfast Chamber of Commerce, with representatives also on the Committee from various towns in the north of Ireland. That Committee was appointed to assist in the providing of proper transit facilities under the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, which was then under consideration. As Chairman of that Committee I had interviews in London with representatives of the Irish Railway Companies. We appeared before the Board of Trade, which suggested that we should meet the railway companies, and the Board of Trade afterwards approved of the agreement made as to revised maximum rates, and other conditions, and Parliament confirmed the arrangement. I have thus had a rather exceptionally wide experience in the study of economic questions affecting Ireland. For the last 4 years I have been engaged in the management of the Ulster Chemical Manure Company, and have 350-400 agents under my control. I visit them 2 or 3 times a year, and am thus brought closely into touch in various parts of Ireland with its agricultural needs, particularly in the north. There is a general consensus of opinion that some revision of the present fiscal arrangements is necessary, and even in the west of Ireland that view strongly prevails. **590**

The people look to agriculture chiefly as their means of support, but the position of the Irish farmer at the present time is not very satisfactory; generally his life is a struggle for existence, and that existence is precarious, owing to the increased importation of food stuffs into Great Britain, the market for Irish produce, and, in a smaller measure, into Ireland itself. There is great competition in almost every branch of his industry—in beef, mutton, bacon, poultry, eggs, butter, oats, oatmeal, &c. Oats is the chief crop—being about 84 % of all the cereals, and owing to climatic conditions the cultivation of oats is most important from a national point of view. The long black Tartary and short or potato oats are those chiefly grown. The crop is fairly good in the north of Ireland this year, but a little light in the straw, owing to the very dry season. Horse breeding in Ireland is a very important industry, as may be judged from the excellent quality of the horses exported, aided, no doubt, by the fine quality of Irish oats, which has a decided bearing on the quality of the horses. The butter trade is very large, and the butter is improving, owing to the more skilful management of the creameries, but tillage rather than grazing would be more advantageous to Ireland—by giving more employment and checking emigration. One great need is also to develop the smaller items—viz., poultry, eggs, and all kinds of vegetables, more especially those of a high class, which would bear the cost of carriage to England, where a ready market exists among a population of over 30 millions, now too freely supplied by the foreigner. The aim should be to make Ireland as far as possible a huge market garden. Not very much is being done in that direction at present, but the development of market gardens would provide employment from an early age amidst healthy surroundings, prevent removal to the large towns, and check emigration. In a country like Ireland anything whatever that would improve the agricultural situation must lead to more employment, whereas steady decrease has taken place in arable land, with a proportionate increase in grass. **State of Agriculture.**

I have been a member of the Belfast Harbour Board for 16 years, and have watched the imports very closely, which are indicative of the trend of business. The flour milling industry has been severely hit, and has been gradually declining for many years, chiefly through the dumping of flour from the United States of America. The particulars are very striking. In the year 1884 the imports of flour into the port of Belfast, which distributes to a very large section of the country, were 31,000 tons, while in 1903 123,000 tons were imported. Of wheat, the importation was 71,000 tons in 1884, and in 1903 it was only 45,000 tons; of bran, which is an offal greatly used by cattle feeders, 10,000 tons were imported in 1884, against 24,000 tons in 1903. Owing to the Americans not being able to export wheat or flour last year, having only a $\frac{2}{3}$ wheat crop, there was a considerable improvement in the Irish milling industry, and a large increase in the output of offals, which, for the same reason, were cheaper. The price of bran has fallen more than 20s. per ton since the milling industry in this country has increased. If flour milling could be maintained on a fair scale it would be greatly to the farmers' interest, because they would then get their cattle feeding much cheaper. **591**

The manufacture of oatmeal was a rather large industry in Ireland in former days, an exporting industry even some 15 years ago, but it has very greatly declined in recent years, mainly owing to the importation of oatmeal, especially from the United States, to the United Kingdom. Great Britain was and is the chief market for it. Ireland is now further interfered with in some measure by the United States direct exports into this country at certain seasons of the year. It is for this country a very important industry, as mills producing oatmeal are chiefly situated in rural districts, and employment is thus obtained where it is most needed. If we could find more to do for the people in manufacturing and agricultural industries, the tendency would be to check emigration, now largely forced by want of occupation. It would keep the people more upon the land, and prevent them going so largely to the towns. They have not sufficient occupation at present. **Market Gardening.**

Market Gardening.

Milling.

Dumped Flour.

Competition of U.S.A. in Oatmeal.

592

593 Education.

Improved agricultural education is very desirable. Education is encouraged and promoted now by the Agricultural Department, and certainly the people are more interested in this question than they were, and becoming more alive to its importance. It has not developed very much as yet, but it will. My agents are generally discussing it, and are very much more interested in the question as time goes on. Methods of agriculture are slowly improving, and farmers are beginning to enquire and to experiment more than they did. If the opportunity is offered them of getting the knowledge they will be quite ready to take advantage of it, though rather slowly, and it certainly ought to be persevered with.

Railway Rates.

There have been great improvements in transit in Ireland by railways, especially during the last 15 years or so, since the Railway and Canal Act was brought into force. We can now get through rates to any place without the disadvantages of terminals at every transference from one railway to another. The disposition of the railway companies generally is to facilitate traffic. It would be an advantage if lower rates were obtainable, but railway companies are not in a position to give them. The railway companies could not do much more, but the farmers should assist them by co-operating and sending larger quantities at a time. Any aid that could be given by the Government towards improved transit facilities by rail, canal, road, or sea, and any further encouragement to the Irish Department of Agriculture in the educational work now given will be thoroughly welcomed by the Irish people, who are more awake to-day than at any time in their history.

Duties.

Excepting the north-east, Ireland is mainly agricultural, and requires special consideration in any proposals for tariff reform.

594 Effect on Oat Milling.

With the exception of a small area in Scotland, Ireland can grow oats better than any other country, and the imposition of a small duty would not be bolstering up a decaying industry, but rather be a case of helping those who can and will help themselves by a slight encouragement, but they will readily be discouraged if the foreigner is allowed to dump oats and oatmeal here, whenever he has an exceptionally heavy crop. There was a small duty a little while ago, which gave more life to the oatmeal manufacturing industry. If that duty had been continued it would have tended to check emigration. The duty at that time was not only upon grain but in rather higher degree, on the meal and the flour. It produced a large revenue, did no injury to any class in Ireland, and was mainly paid by the exporter; it had a beneficial effect. With this experience, moderate duties would be desirable on oats and oatmeal. As regards wheat, Ireland, owing to the damp climate is not suitable for its growth, it is clear that Irish millers must obtain foreign wheat for their trade. A small duty on importation from the States, Russia, Argentina, &c., would help to encourage trade in this cereal with India, Canada and Australia, but as we cannot depend solely on the present imports from our Colonies, this duty should only be levied as a means to obtain better terms with foreign countries for our export trade with them, and should be withdrawn if this result was obtained. The proposal to put 2s. a quarter duty upon all imported grain, except maize, and a somewhat higher duty in proportion on flour, is a right one, and would be beneficial to Ireland, and would meet with general approval. A duty of 5 % on dairy produce imported would be an assistance to the dairy farmer. A 5 % duty on imported meat, with preference to the Colonies in this and other proposed duties, would be an advantage to Ireland as an almost exclusively agricultural country.

Preference.

595

WITNESS No. 115.

Written Evidence.

MRS. M. G. E. HAYDEN

(Farmer and Grazier, Coolnamuck, Carrick-on-Suir, Carrickbeg, Co. Waterford).

I farm about 1,000 statute acres, mostly store cattle and sheep.

State of Agriculture.

Agriculture is very bad and uncertain, chiefly due to falling prices. Wool and sheep have been rather more remunerative since the drought in Australia, before that wool was down to 4d. and 5d. per lb. Profits have decreased so much that tillage does not pay; the large supplies of foreign produce are responsible for this. Free Trade is the one cause of all the evils of Ireland—its poverty, depopulation and land agitation. In foreign countries agriculture is protected and encouraged and they have taken advantage of our Free Trade system.

Labour.

Ploughmen are scarce, and we are mostly dependent on married women who cannot go to America, and on very young and old people for the same reason. Wages have not altered much. There is nothing doing in winter but the peeling of sallies (willows) for basket-making, and this is most precarious.

596

Duties.

When my husband took this farm in 1869 he made the whole rent (nearly £450) out of one field of 40 Irish acres of wheat, employing about 30 men to reap it with hooks.

There was a factory close by giving work to about 800, and another employing a large number, and flour mills all over the country, now in ruins. Irish parents do not hope to have their children with them in their old age, for as soon as they can scrape the passage money together they emigrate to America. All this is the effect of Free Trade. We should tax the goods of all countries that tax ours, and the methods proposed by Mr. Chamberlain are the only ones that will save us from utter and complete disaster.

WITNESS No. 116.

Written Evidence.

MR. W. HENDERSON, J.P.

(Farmer and Breeder, Lawton, Coupar-Angus, Perthshire, Scotland).

I am prepared to give evidence on grain, roots (including potatoes) and cattle, and sheep breeding and feeding, all in connection with arable land. I am the owner of 240 acres of arable land, the tenant of 280 acres arable and 150 acres grass land, and I manage for a non-resident, 160 acres of arable land.

During recent years sheep have paid very well on account of the reduction in sheep population of such countries as Australia by drought, and on account of rise in price of wool. But now store sheep here are very much dearer relatively than fat sheep, and as the chief breeding grounds are being turned into deer forests, etc., we want to import store sheep if the business is not to become as bad as the cattle feeding industry. Cattle feeding has been ruinous. Potatoes have been profitable because we can grow large and sound crops, the land and our system of farming being suitable. But when potatoes are largely grown the whole stock on the farm must be highly fed with cake, &c., to produce manure and maintain the fertility of the land, as potatoes are an exhausting crop.

Our export trade in potatoes to Germany and the United States suffers through a duty of about 40s. in the ton against us. The value of a ton of potatoes last year was 30s. to 35s. It would make a great difference to us if these duties were removed as we would then be able to export large quantities when the prices are low here. Potato growing would then become less profitable to farmers in Germany and the U.S.A. and they would be less likely to destroy the industry here by unfair competition. The U.S.A. does not, like Germany, send us a lot of potatoes, but if we could compete against them on fair terms in the potato-growing markets of the world then it is reasonable to suppose we would not feel their competition in other branches so much.

Cattle feeding has been very bad business for 10 or 12 years, owing to the embargo on the importation of lean or young cattle and complete freedom in the importation of beef, "on the hoof," frozen, or in tins. These young cattle form our raw material of which the beef is the finished article. Imported meats escape the rigid inspection given to the home grown article, which is grossly unfair to farmers here and a grave source of danger to consumers. Canadian cattle were the most absolutely healthy animals we ever handled. Those cattle paid 40s. a month for fattening, or £6 a head for 3 months—the average time they were kept. Since the embargo in 1892, about 1,500,000 Canadian cattle have come here and 500,000 have gone to the United States which otherwise would have come here. Suppose only one-half of these 2,000,000 of cattle had passed into the farmers' hands for 3 months' feeding, £6,000,000 would have been earned, much employment would have resulted and a vast amount of manure produced to fertilise the land. Mr. Bickerdike, in the Canadian House of Commons on July 7th, 1905, stated very emphatically, and it is now admitted on all hands, that there is not, and never has been, any disease among Canadian cattle, and that the whole object of the embargo is to protect the breeders. The feeling in Canada on this matter is very strong. Canadians bitterly resent the stigma of disease being put upon their cattle, and the Canadian House of Commons and Senate, on a vote, unanimously condemned the action of the British Government. In the debate Mr. Bickerdike took a leading part, and I may quote from him as voicing the opinions of the House. He said:—"I think I am safe in saying that the British Board of Agriculture, for the last 14 years, have been and are at present perverting the facts by mean subterfuges and equivocal language for the purpose of continuing a system of protection, not against disease, but against competition in live stock from the Dominion of Canada. This has been going on since 1892. Efforts have been made by my hon. friend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Fisher) to have the embargo removed, but with no effect. A deaf ear has been turned to us on all occasions. I claim that their persistent ignoring of all evidence, their repudiating of all fair trade principles, their denials of justice to Canada, their dishonest and unpatriotic treatment of the Canadian cattle question, prove them to be either wanting in statesmanship or false to the interests of the British Empire, of which Canada is at least an important pillar." It is a clear absurdity to suppose you can ultimately raise the price of raw material, such as store animals, in this country, while you have free importation of the finished article—fat cattle and sheep. The effect of the embargo has been to kill the feeding industry. This is shown by the fact that while the turnip acreage in Great Britain decreased by about 80,000 acres in the 10 years before the embargo, it decreased by 337,000 acres in the ten years after the embargo. In addition to this, breeders of cattle are encouraged to send all their sound breeding animals abroad to foreign buyers, who are our competitors in the production of beef, while the unsound, unhealthy, tubercular casts are retained to breed here. The dairying industry suffers from the same cause. We cannot compete against the Argentine Republic, the Continent, Australia, &c., where dairymen get cows at from 1/6th to 1/3 the cost here. The only solution is the free importation of live cattle from such countries as Canada where disease is wholly unknown. The removal of the embargo would raise the price of all Canada's export cattle £2 to £3 a head, and be a great boon to her. In the 6 years ending 1902 the loss to the Colony on this account is estimated at £2,408,300. In the year 1892, when the embargo was put in force, we received from Canada 99,235 head of cattle. In 1893, the number fell to 83,000. Ten years later, notwithstanding all drawbacks, Canada exported to Great Britain 147,201 head of cattle. Had there been no embargo the number would have been 200,000 or 300,000. The dead meat trade also entails a loss to this country of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 annually in offals, hides, horns, &c., and there is no raw material which will give more employment and circulate more money before it is turned out in finished articles, such as leather, glue, &c.

Profits have decreased on account of unfair competition and our being prevented importing any store cattle or sheep, while the finished article has free admission to all farms.

We want more practical agricultural education. Above all, however, we want co-operation in agricultural matters—there are too many middlemen unnecessarily living on the land.

The transfer of land ought to be cheapened and simplified to the utmost extent. The Board of Agriculture ought to be modelled on the Danish plan which secures practical men to serve on it, instead of maintaining the Board more as a berth for men who are no use for anything else—for retired soldiers, &c., than for the purpose of benefiting agriculture.

Labour is becoming scarcer and less efficient every year, because all the best men are drawn away to other jobs, the price of agricultural products, &c., not enabling farmers to pay sufficiently high wages. Wages were too long in rising, in comparison with town rates. Had they risen sooner to what they are now labour would not have been so scarce and inefficient. Small holdings would help to keep the people in the country. Wages have risen very much in recent years. 16 years ago 3 single men on one of my farms, with the same perquisites as to-day had £20, £21 and £27. Now they have £40, £44 and £45.

State of
Agriculture.

597

Potatoes.

Cattle Feeding and
Canadian
Importation.

598

599

600

Profits.

Co-operation.

Land Transfer.
Board of Agriculture.

Labour.

Wages.

- 601 Causes of Change.** The change in the condition of agriculture dates from 1887, which was a very bad year on account of the drought, and cattle paid well until 1892. Now land is being put out of cultivation and used for sheep breeding. In 1887 prices for all produce were low, but we had free importation of Canadian cattle and Iceland sheep, and by consuming our produce in fattening these animals we made more out of it than by selling, and greatly increased, as a result, the fertility of our farms. After 1892 cattle fattening became a very bad business and we are now obliged to sell our produce no matter how low the prices.
- Railway Rates.** We are very much handicapped by the heavy railway rates. Much of the foreign produce coming here is really bounty fed by cheap railway rates, especially in countries where the railways are state-owned, and by bounties paid to shipping companies. Denmark pays the shipping company between Harwich and Denmark £60,000 a year. The through rate for foreign produce is also much cheaper than the rate for home produce.
- Local Rates.** Local rates, stipends, &c., have risen all round. Stipends paid in grain according to Fairs' Prices, are much more burdensome because it costs more to produce grain now, with higher wages, &c., and because much land is now not able to grow grain. A farm which is out of cultivation could not produce the stipend grain, but still the owner has to pay according to the value of the grain in the County.
- Annual Outgoings.** My annual outgoings per acre are:—Rent 25s., labour 20s. to 25s. in a 6-course shift, feeding stuffs 30s. to 40s., manure 5s., machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts 5s. to 7s. 6d., rates and taxes 6d. to 9d. an acre as tenant, with Agricultural Rates Act rebate.
- 602 Duties.** The revenue obtained from the proposed duties ought to reduce our taxation. I do not consider a 2s. duty on foreign grain will raise the price of grain here, but it will cause more wheat to be produced in Canada and draw population there. Whatever strengthens the British Empire is bound to help us, possibly indirectly, but none the less surely. Having the Canadian North West in view as a source of supply for British grain needs I am of opinion that the production of wheat there will increase enormously; so it will in the Argentine Republic, but I do not think we will get much food from Natal. If we could get off the 39s. a ton duty on potatoes going to the United States and Germany, and the duty off wool going to the United States, and had Canadian cattle admitted free then I would not be afraid to make farming pay. A higher duty on flour than wheat would have the effect of giving me cheaper offal, a most important matter, and of causing more industry. In the same way dead meat should be more highly taxed than cattle, as the slaughtering and offal would give more employment. I was told in Chicago that almost no profit was made on the beef exported here, but great profit and industry resulted in the manufacturing of offals. As farming becomes more profitable more labour will be required, and labour being scarce, wages will rise. As far as I can judge, a preferential arrangement with the Colonies would enable me to keep more stock, increase the fertility of my land, and grow more potatoes.
- Canadian Wheat.**
- Potatoes.**
- Flour.**
- Meat.**
- Effect on Labour.**
- Preference.**

603 WITNESS No. 117.

MR. THOMAS HESKETT

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Plumpton Hall, Penrith, representing the Cumberland and Westmoreland Chamber of Agriculture).

- Farmer and Grazier.** I am prepared to give evidence on the breeding and feeding of cattle and sheep, also on arable farming generally, and grazing of stock. I farm 430 acres in all, 300 arable, and 130 meadow and pasture.
- State of Agriculture.** Some branches of agriculture are decidedly not prosperous in my district. I allude to the feeding of cattle and to the growing of wheat and barley, which have almost gone out of cultivation. Oats is practically the only grain crop we grow. We have to grow some grain crop on our arable land, and we lose less by growing oats than by any other crops. The great cause of the unprofitableness of producing beef in this country is the importation of foreign beef, and the low price at which it is sold in the British markets. Sheep breeding and feeding for these last 3 or 4 years has been one of our most profitable branches of farming. This was partly owing to the increased price of wool last year and the previous year, and partly to the great drought in the Australian Colonies, which checked the importation of sheep. Profits generally have decreased in recent years in proportion to the acreage farmed.
- 604 Supply of Labour.** We find considerable difficulty in securing labour on arable farms during the busy seasons of the year, particularly in the hay and corn harvests, and during the time when turnips are to single. This is most acute on the large arable farms, which are remote from the towns and large villages. The quality of the labour is scarcely as good as formerly. In Cumberland we board a good many young men in our own farmhouses; their work is not, on the whole, as good as it used to be. But where we have cottages, and married men, I think there is very little to complain of, and the work is practically as good. In Cumberland 20 years ago we could get a considerable proportion of female labour, but at present there is no female labour, and the labour of children is scarcer than formerly. We employ most children in the singling of turnips, and when the season for this comes about we find great difficulty. I would regard it as a great advantage if the children were allowed three days to work, and three days for school after they got to a certain age. Of course children are very little use at anything on a farm until they are 10 or 11 years of age.
- Wages.** Wages during the last 20 years have increased something like 20 per cent.—not altogether in money value, but our men do not work the same hours they did 20 years ago, and in the summer time they require more days off, Saturday afternoons and other days, which we are bound to give them.
- Causes of Change.** I attribute the change in the position of agriculture generally to the fall in prices. We began to feel it as near as I can tell in the year 1879. This has caused much of the best arable land to be laid down to grass in districts where it would graze, also large lots of strong clay land in the high-lying districts which

in former years produced wheat. The latter class of land cannot now be cultivated at a profit. I do not think labour difficulties have much to do with it. If we still had the good prices we should be able to get over the labour difficulties. We would be able to pay more wages, and get all the labour we wanted.

I cannot say that we suffer much from railway rates. There are isolated instances, but I do not think, on the whole, we have much to complain of. Our only canal connects Preston with Kendal, and as it is in the hands of the L. & N.W. Railway Co. the rates are the same as by rail.

In the matter of market organization a considerable change has taken place during the last 20 years. Auction Marts have superseded the old Chartered Fairs for live stock, and grain now is mostly sold in wagon loads where it was formerly sold in smaller quantities. On the whole that has been an improvement. It is probably a little more costly, but auction marts are carried on to a great extent on cash principles, and they have been an advantage to farmers.

In most of the market towns small tolls are collected upon all produce taken into the market. It is a great grievance to the local farmers that they should be charged these tolls on their cattle, or sheep, or grain, or whatever they may take to the market, whilst the foreign grain of all descriptions, and foreign mutton and beef, can be brought in and sold without paying anything. I do not know if they have a right to charge upon foreign produce, but that would be worth examining, as much foreign produce is taken into the markets—a great quantity of maize, and foreign beef and mutton coming in dead as well. It is a small charge, but still it is vexatious. I think it is a penny for a beast. The money collected is indirectly a relief to the rates of the town, not of the rural districts. In the auction mart at Penrith, where the tolls are compounded, the Auction Mart Co. pay £100 a year to the town.

I do not think co-operative buying and selling of much value to medium or large farmers, but it might be some advantage to small holders.

Our Education Committee is very active on the matter of agricultural education, sending lecturers round on many subjects, and also holding dairy classes in all the villages. They also have an agricultural farm near Penrith, a joint farm belonging to the two Councils—which is doing very good work. The dairy classes are very successful, and after 3 or 4 such classes have been held in a village the quality of the butter is much improved. The people attend well, and a great deal of interest is shown. There should be no difficulty in extending that kind of education to almost any extent, and there is no reason why the same system of holding dairy classes in the villages, which answers so well in our district, should not be practised all over the country.

The supply of cottages is one of our weak points. There is a great scarcity of cottages on many of the arable farms. If the tenant approaches his proprietor to build cottages he is met with—"Will you pay interest upon the capital expended?" The tenant cannot afford to do that owing to the cost of erection. I would suggest that the Government should provide money to all owners of property, where cottages are required, at 2 per cent., repayable in 60 years, which would mean paying something like $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. upon the investment. That would be within the reach of the tenant to pay, and it would be no charge upon the owner. It would relieve the congestion of labour at the busy seasons of the year, and to my certain knowledge many young men whom we have in our houses, and who, when they marry, have to go to the towns because we have not cottages for them, would stay in these cottages. An additional supply of cottages would be a most important factor in the agricultural position. With additional cottages an adequate supply of labour might be kept upon the land, and it would also check the migration into the towns.

Local rates have increased, and are likely to increase, especially in reference to highways and education. In the Penrith Union the average rate is 2s. 3d. at present. In some of the parishes that is an increase. Where there were School Boards previously to the passing of the Education Act I should say it is about the same, but where there were Voluntary Schools it is an increase of about 3d., owing to the Education Act.

The tenants in every case have got the benefit of the Agricultural Rating Act. I have never heard of a case in the counties where the landlord has taken the advantage. I am very anxious to see it renewed; in fact I should like to see it carried further. So long as we have to compete with the foreigner, as we have at present, we ought to either charge the foreigner a sum for all the produce that he sends us, equal to what we pay in rates and taxes, or we ought to have the whole of the taxation taken off agricultural land. We cannot have free food, there is no such thing as free food, as long as the raw material in the shape of agricultural land in this country bears one penny in taxation.

My rent is between 24s. and 25s. an acre. Labour, roughly speaking, works out at about £1 an acre, taking the arable land and the grazing land together. Feeding stuffs and manure ought, I think, to go together, because the more cake and meals and home-grown corn a farmer uses, the less artificial manures he ought to use. In my own case, during these last 14 years, I have reduced my bill for artificial manures more than 60 per cent. by using more cake and home-grown produce on the farm.

I have considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals and what their effect is likely to be so far as my own farm is concerned. I do not think that there would be much immediate benefit to the tenant farmers. The profit would not be great directly. The benefit they would get would be on the amount of money which was collected from the duties on foreign imported goods. I have no doubt that a certain proportion of that money would be allocated to local taxation, and that would relieve the local ratepayers of some portion of their heavy burden. There is another reason why they would benefit the farmer: that is that the working classes throughout the country generally, in the larger centres of population, would be more steadily employed; and so long as the masses of the country are steadily employed we always have a better market for what we produce than when employment is unsteady. I do not think that we would get much direct benefit immediately, but the benefits will come in an indirect way. Of the duties Mr. Chamberlain proposes, so far as the northern counties are concerned, I think those on wheat, and on meat, would be most advantageous, and more so the duties on flour, on account of getting the offals for feeding stock.

Railway Rates.

Market
Organization.

Tolls.

Co-operation.

Education.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Local Rates

Agricultural
Rates Act.

Outgoings.

Duties.

Effect on Rates.

Effect on
Labour.

MR. ROBERT HOLBROOK

(Farmer, The Hollies, Watnall, Nottingham).

I commenced farming in 1850 on a small farm. I moved to another village, and there I held a farm of 400 acres for 40 years. Now I have my own farm in Leicestershire of about 164 acres, and a little farm which I rent, altogether about 300 acres.

State of
Agriculture.

On my own farm there were about 24 acres old grass, and now I have got it all down to grass except 50 acres. I am rather against that, but in this case it was an isolated farm and the labour was going away, and the best plan was to lay it down, reduce the labour and the working expenses. For the first 20 years farming was very satisfactory. We had good prices, and were getting a good, honest living, and the country generally was prosperous. That continued till 1875. In that year we had a great flood and all the low-lying districts in the neighbourhood of rivers—my farm adjoined the River Trent at that time—were flooded. The consequence was the stacks were all steaming after the water had gone down. The harvest time had been so wet that the harvest was got very badly, but this entirely spoiled it for the market. We had to thresh it later on and use a great deal of it for our cattle, and some little we sent to market. I lost £500 that year, principally through the wet season and the flood. The wet seasons continued till 1880, and we seemed to get worse and worse. Prices went down, and instead of making £3 for our wheats we were selling them at under £1. I sold wheat myself at 18s. a quarter. From that time the prices never rallied. They have gone up a little the last 2 or 3 years, but we have been selling our wheats from 24s. to 25s. and 26s. ever since 1875. At the prices of the last 10 years it has been impossible to grow a wheat crop at a profit. Every acre of wheat loses money.

610

Prices.

Profits.

When the depression came the returns were £1,000 a year less than what I made previously. The landlord took £200 a year off the rent without a word, so that I held the farm until I came away at £500 a year, but I could not get interest for my money. The rent of that farm now is about the same, but the tenant is more of a dealer. I was 40 years on that land. It was a typical farm of the district, and the largest. Most of the farmers fared as badly as I did; in fact most of the farms changed hands 2 or 3 times over. I did not alter my system. It is a very difficult matter to lay land down into grass. It takes years before you get a return. I farmed the land as highly as I could to get a profit, and to make the best of it. Before the Malt Tax was taken off we were making a fair price for our barleys—I may say 45s.—but when that tax was taken off it reduced the price of barley 18s. a quarter directly; for the simple reason that we were thrown entirely into the hands of the brewers. The small maltsters who used to buy our barleys were all done away with—they could not compete with the brewers. I believe that agriculturists as a body were in favour of taking the Malt Tax off. It was the greatest mistake they ever made, but I do not know that the leading brewers told the agriculturists so at the time and recommended them not to press it. I am aware that Denmark was all arable land up to a certain time, and that they used to export corn, and that they almost suddenly gave up that kind of farming and took to dairying, and have done very well. The dairy farmers have done best here. They grow green food for their cattle. We were too far from the market to do anything of that sort, and we had no station. You want to be near the market to send in your milk. I did try it for 2 years, but I could not get on with it, so I gave it up. The Government of Denmark did all it possibly could to help farmers and lent them money to buy their cattle. There has been nothing done for the English farmer. In some parts of Leicestershire, where the land is strong, a good deal of it has been neglected and has gone out of cultivation. It has laid itself down in grass, and has gone for what it is worth, perhaps, for a few sheep or rabbits. I know one farm in Nottinghamshire of 100 acres with a good house and buildings on it that was sold for £1,000. The house and buildings cost as much as the farm was sold at.

611

Dairying.

Labour.

At one time labourers were satisfied with a much more moderate rate of wages than they are now. At present we have to employ men to drive ploughs when boys used to do the work. Men with families have to keep their children till they are 14 years of age before they can earn a penny. That is a tax that must come out of the farmer's pocket. A farmer cannot see his men starve.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

I got the benefit of the Agricultural Rates Act; the landlord was too good a judge to put up the rent. Not in one single case was this done. I do not fear that the landlords would take any undue advantage of any improvement in the agricultural conditions. The tenant farmers and their labourers would get their fair share of any such improved conditions.

612

Duties.

All manufactured wheat, that is flour, ought to pay a duty of 5s. a quarter, because we have to pay so much for our offals through the mills standing idle. I remember when we had 15 to 20 mills in Nottinghamshire, and now there are not 6. I should put a small duty on wheat, say, 2s. Barleys for malting ought to be protected in some way. I would put a duty on all imported barleys. I agree that the cattle feeders and pig feeders would not like that, but the cattle feeders have the same opportunity of growing as we have. I do not see myself that they should be considered so very much. If it is a duty that the public will not swallow, then we cannot help it; we will have to do the best we can. I grew a fair quantity of barley—perhaps 300 quarters a year—on that farm, and I should like to see a better price for it. I did not like selling my barleys at 25s. and 26s., that is the price to-day, when I had been in the habit of selling them at 44s. and 45s. You cannot draw any line between barley used for feeding purposes and barley used for brewing. The foreign barleys are all thin. They are not the size of our barleys. But they have a better climate than we have and their barley comes in much drier. Ours, as a rule, have to go on the kiln before they can be malted, so that the brewer takes the foreign barley in preference. I would guarantee to say that Bass's—taking them as an example—use twice as much foreign barley as they do English, because it is drier and works better. I should tax all foreign produce, maize included. I do not use less than 100 quarters of maize a year, and I am willing to pay an extra price for it. I should be only too glad if I could get a better price for my own.

Malting.

WITNESS No. 119.

MR. SAMUEL KIDNER

(Farmer, Bickley, Milverton, West Somerset).

I am a delegate of a Club of 200 to the Central Chamber. We have discussed the matter, and are practically of one opinion.

I farm about 300 acres, half grass and half arable as near as can be, and have been on the same farm 55 years, farming it myself for 40 years.

State of
Agriculture.

Since I have had experience in farming, wheat-growing has deteriorated more than any other branch; but all over profits in my district have considerably diminished. But the condition of agriculture during the last 7 or 8 years has been rather better for the tenant-farmer. Rents have come down very considerably. When the low prices came the tenant-farmer had to bear the whole brunt, but now that the landlord has borne his share of it things are more satisfactory, although there is not much in it even now.

My rent has been considerably reduced. At one time I paid 47s. 6d. and tithes; now it is about 34s. without tithes. I am not finding fault with my landlord; I daresay he could make more from it if he tried.

Rent.

Personally, I have never had any difficulty in procuring labour; but that will not apply to the district, though the scarcity is not so great as it was some few years ago. The greatest difficulty is experienced where there are not sufficient cottages on the farm. My farm is very well supplied with good cottages with good gardens, and I have not taken on a fresh man for over 14 years. The rate of wages of the labourers in my district has changed very little in recent years. Perhaps one of the chief things we suffer in is this: Formerly we used to get a great deal of our labour done by boys and women. This work they could do quite as well as men; but we have now to put men to do it, and it becomes very much more expensive. The women do not now go to work; they look upon it as beneath their dignity, and you can see many of them at their cottage doors doing nothing. It is very difficult to get boys on account of their going to school and then going to work somewhere else. That has contributed to the position, even in my case, although I am rather exceptionally situated as regards labour, being not far from a village.

Labour and
Cottage Accommoda-
tion.Boy and Women
Labour.

I began to find a change in the general condition of agriculture a year or two before 1879. Things were going badly, and then 1879 came—a very bad year climatically—and that seemed the climax. For many years after things went very badly, and many branches of farming have been more or less unremunerative since. The effect of the fall in prices has been that many farmers have failed. After 1879 much land that was unremunerative to cultivate was laid to grass, cultivation in general deteriorated, and less labour was employed.

Causes of Change.

We have some difficulty as regards railway rates. So far as can be judged, without expert knowledge, railway rates are unreasonably high for home as against foreign produce. There ought to be some more simple mode for the traders to know what they have to pay. About 1890 I was sending sheep from my place to London, and they were charged uniformly 2s. a head. Just about 1900 I sent some more, and I found they were charged 3s. 4d. That was under the truck rate instead of the head rate. I refused to pay it, and I demanded a through rate. After a year's correspondence and interviewing the railway company at Paddington, and appearing before the Board of Trade, I got a concession of 7s. 6d. a truck. If I had not been in connection with the Mansion House Association, and been able to come to London, I should not have had that redress. I think there ought to be some simpler means by which the ordinary trader could meet such cases. I quite agree that it is the local Councils who have raised the local rates, of which the railway companies pay a portion without representation, and I should have no objection to the railway companies being represented on such Councils so that they might keep down the expenditure.

Railway Rates.

Our Club was started more than 20 years ago for buying and selling on the co-operative system. As regards purchasing our manures, we do a good deal. I have had the whole of mine through the Club since, but our members do not avail themselves of it as much as I should like. A lot of them hold back until we have our tenders in, and then their manure merchants make terms with them, and give them longer credit probably in a good many cases. The credit is a great factor in the case. We always get a guarantee that the manure is analysed, and if it is not up to the standard an allowance has to be made, which these other men do not get; and they do not realise that they may get swindled very often. The system has increased a little, but not very much. The same men mostly have traded from the beginning. In my opinion, it would be advantageous if it did develop. Selling is another matter.

Co-operation.

We find local rates and taxes continually increasing. We have had the relief under the Agricultural Rates Act, but the half-yearly rate seems to be almost as much as the two-quarterly rate used to be. I got the full measure of relief under that Act, and that was the case in my district, with very few exceptions. Where farms have been sold and new tenancies created it is very difficult to know how it operates; but otherwise I do not know of a case where it was taken advantage of by the landowner. I am anxious to see a fuller measure with regard to local rating altogether.

Local Rates and
Agricultural Rates
Act

The outgoings on my home farm of 250 acres are: Rent, £410; rates and taxes, £44; labour, £360; feeding stuffs, £300; manures, £60; seeds and seed corn, £60; tradesmen's bills, £50; implements and sundries, £100.

Outgoings.

I have considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals for the imposition of duties on agricultural produce. My opinion is that if you can get the whole country to go together, it will be a very good thing for the country; but if the food of the people has to be left out and other things taxed, it is better to wait until we are all of one mind. Small duties that in no way interfere with production would be paid by the foreign producer, and a large revenue could be raised without affecting the consumer. If this gave little help it would give

Duties.

617 **Duties**
—continued.

encouragement to the home producer, and would constitute a weapon wherewith to stay the enormous tariffs being built against us, and would strengthen the foundations of our industries, without which the country's prosperity must decline. I would not favour any proposal which did not extend, in some degree, at all events, to agriculture as well as to manufactures, and I think if you do not tax wheat you are throwing away your best weapon of retaliation. I do not attach any great importance to the question as to whether the duty on wheat is 1s. or 2s. If you went much further than that, I should.

Effect on Labour.

The labourer would get some benefit from these duties, apart from any general improvement that they might effect in the position of the country. If I did not think them good for the labourer I should not advocate them. Duties would tend to maintain the industries of the country, and that would give the labourer a better market for his labour; and that is the best thing the labourer can have. I do not think the imposition of these duties could possibly enable me to give the labourer any increase of wages. I think we should gain more indirectly. From the revenue we may get some relief in rates, and then again by the improvement of the industries of the country the people would want more luxuries that we may be able to produce. Except in that indirect way, I cannot see where we should gain. But, generally speaking, whatever advantage we get out of it the labourers would share. I can say with confidence that when a farmer is doing well there is no man spends his money more lavishly on his business.

618

WITNESS No. 120.

MR. THOMAS LATHAM

(Farmer and Breeder, Bishop's Court, Dorchester, Oxfordshire).

I farm in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, about 1,000 acres arable and 500 acres pasture on mixed soil. I make butter and breed sheep, and farm about the same as I did 20 or 30 years ago. Some of it is my own land. I have been farming close on 50 years. I keep a good many cattle.

**State of
Agriculture.**

There was a little profit in years gone by, none now. Agriculture is very much depressed and the system of farming very much altered. Heavy land, arable, cannot be made to pay even by selling all the straw, a system much in vogue, and the land plainly shows the effect. Light land is not sufficiently stocked with sheep and in consequence suffers sadly. Milking instead of sheep farming will soon tell its own tale. Pastures are nothing like so good as formerly and the system of laying down is all wrong. If land be laid down to grass it can certainly be worked for less, but less stock is produced per acre. Very little arable land can be profitably turned into permanent pasture. Straw itself as manure is worth about 10s. or 12s. A farmer would be wise to sell his straw at 40s. a ton and buy cake, but that may be carried too far, and the land is considerably impoverished thereby. There is no better manure than farmyard manure. Farmers are using artificial manures and not feeding as many sheep as they ought to. There are hardly any to feed, their numbers are so reduced. I grow a great many more potatoes now than I used, and satisfactorily. We have not made anything like as much meat during the past 10 years as formerly, because it does not pay. Beef has been a very bad trade.

619

Labour.

The rents of heavy land have fallen more than 50 % and the other about 33 %

The labour is by no means so good as it used to be. Less interest is taken all round, but we can get enough all the year through.

Wages.

We pay from 12s. to 16s. a week, with sometimes a cottage into the bargain.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

We are well off for cottages. They are filled principally with agricultural labourers. Cottages have got scarce where they are let to artisans, &c. We keep ours for our own people. We have no artisans. I have 46 cottages on my occupation and everyone tenanted by agricultural labourers.

Education.

If a little more interest were taken by the schoolmasters in the agriculture and farming round about them, if they took the children on the land and showed them all about the crops and interested them in it, and if the children's labour could, by the consent of the various School Boards, be used for the purpose of the crops, it would be a great means of keeping the children on the land. I work several reaping machines and always have a boy to each every year to ride my horses during the holidays, and invariably these boys stop with me.

620

**Agricultural Rates
Act.**

We have benefited by the Agricultural Rates Act, and I have not known any landlord take advantage of that, but the benefit is almost wiped out now by the increase of taxation to nearly double.

Railway Rates.

Foreign goods are carried at less than half the charge for home grown. It has come to my knowledge within the last 3 weeks (7th February, 1905) that straw is being run from Dover to Aldershot at about 5s. a ton. Our distance is only half and we are charged 13s. 2d. This is a very serious matter.

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will have but little effect. So much depends on the way the money goes that is found by them. This could be most advantageously spent in the reduction of taxation. It is very heavy now. The labourers would get more continuous employment, if farmers made greater profits, and possibly a rise of wages. I think the proposed duties will all be paid by the senders, not by the consumers, because, when the 1s. tax was on, things were no dearer. We lost a lot of money by its being taken off. 2s. a quarter duty on corn would in no way reduce the supply, for there is no other market so good as the English market. The offals are such a great loss that I want a very heavy duty on flour. We have lost an industry. Farmers are much greater losers over this than the public think. I am not in favour of admitting maize free, any more than barley or other thing used as feeding stuff. I favour a tax on hay and straw of 10s. a ton, but perhaps this is rather high. No very great incentive should be given to the agriculturist

to sell more hay and straw than at present. The land is suffering from the enormous amount now sold that used not to be, and it is very difficult to bring it back. I should like to see everything coming into our country pay something towards the taxes of the country. Our losses at the present time are due to the unfair taxation of the land. We want a good tax on potatoes again; 5% would not be sufficient. I would put a higher duty on dead meat than on live, as there are a great many by-products that are advantageous here and employ a large amount of labour. Dead meat reduces the price in our wholesale markets more than the live, the reason being that it is an article going into consumption much sooner and consequently cannot be kept.

WITNESS No. 121.

MR. F. McDONNELL
(Dunmore, Co. Galway).

I am in a large way of general business, have 3 large houses in different parts of the country, and in fact sell everything, and have a wide experience of the general condition of the district, which is entirely composed of small holdings intersected here and there by large grazing farms.

Agricultural prices have, within the last 14 or 15 years, dropped about 20%. The effect of this fall has been stagnation in trade all round and much emigration to America. It has affected the farmers by diminishing the families considerably, leaving at home only the aged people with a few who stop to till the farm, and even of these some have to go to England during the harvest and finish their own tilling when they come back. Agriculture is decidedly the reverse of flourishing and is steadily getting worse. It is not possible to say which branch has suffered most—tillage, or cattle raising or cattle feeding. Tillage has suffered greatly. The change in the condition of agriculture began within the last 10 or 12 years. There is a good deal of unpopulated land in Roscommon. From where I live to the town of Roscommon is 28 English miles. Most of the land between is very good land, fit for anything, but there are no people, only herds' houses. It is all occupied by big graziers, and they are not making any money out of it. This land is sadly in want of draining; it could be greatly improved, but under the present Act of Parliament a joint application from landlord and tenant is necessary to get the drainage effected and they will not act together. The grazing industry does not give a great deal of employment, and the graziers are miserly and do not spend much money. I should be glad to part with my grazing land and should expect to get a good price.

We get a good price for the local butter always, and if the trade were properly attended to, and selections of eggs properly made, packed fresh and sent right away to London, it might be a very thriving industry indeed for Connaught. Something could be done to improve the agricultural condition especially in the fruit and the egg and the butter trades by providing better freight and better opportunities of sending produce to the market. Produce that cannot be sent away is no use.

The cultivation of the land itself is not so good as it might be, but there are contributory causes; even if it were better, facilities for the carriage of produce hardly exist, in many places 15 or 16 Irish miles of cartage is necessary. In Belgium there are railways for agricultural purposes alone, and right through the country a series of tram lines to feed those railways, advantages that we do not possess here. There is not the slightest doubt that the deficiency of railway transport is one of the contributing elements.

Nothing can be done in Ireland at present beyond improving the freights and facilitating the conveyance and exportation of butter and eggs, &c., but they will not be much better while the holdings are as they are. The Land Act should have gone further, because the holders only bought what they had, and that, even at a much lower price, is not sufficient for a family to live on. Each family should have 20 or 30 Irish acres of tillage land at least. With railway facilities, once they had the land they would be very thrifty and good people something like in Belgium. Increasing the size of the holdings would increase the population.

Throwing two existing holdings together, except in some instances, would not answer, as some holdings are so bad that one cannot live on them unless the season is very favourable. We have a great deal of rain and the holders' efforts get wiped out because they are generally on bog soil, with no subsoil whatever. My district is largely populated by small holders with an average of 12 acres of bad land cut up into fields of 2 or 3 acres. The land needs liming, manuring, cultivating and sowing to grass; it can be made good and I have done it myself but it costs money, which these small men do not possess. 12 acres is not sufficient for their large families and wholesale emigration is the result. These small holders do work as labourers at anything they can get, but there is no work in Ireland for them. They buy some young stock and feed them to re-sell or keep. The small holdings are mostly tillage. They have to buy hay to feed the stock. If they had larger holdings, and if they fed their cattle and put the manure out on their fields, they would materially benefit; they could then take up butter-making and poultry rearing. It is a curious fact that in Ireland, wherever the land is good it is used for grazing and where it is bad there are human beings; 13 or 14 miles of country devoted to cattle and without inhabitants is not as it should or might be. Larger holdings (personally I favour ownerships) on better land is what is required and these small men might be sent to Leinster if land on the grazing farms could be bought at a fair price, it would be a good investment for so far the Land Act has been a great success and there are no defaulters. If Irish-Americans returned to Ireland it would be well, as they would have capital and would come if they could get land. The creation of as large a peasant proprietorship as possible would be best both for England and for Ireland. These 12-acre men will be the owners if Mr. Wyndham's Act is carried. Every man in Ireland would buy if there was money forthcoming to-morrow. All my land could be sold at once but the blocking of it financially prevents the sale. The Act has been a huge success as it is, and the amount of applications exceed anything that was expected. There would be no risk to anybody in lending, because this money is paid back the first. Unless the Government established banks to lend the money at about 3% it would be impossible for these men with 12 acres to finance 30 acres even if it were given them. They do not pay so much to the Bank of Ireland but to the other banks they pay 8 and 10%, and it is very hard to make 8 or 10% on anything now.

State of
Agriculture.

622

Want of Transport.

623

Holdings.

624

625 Labour.

There is a difficulty in getting labour now. The quality in Connaught is good, but in Leinster not so good: they are not as good workmen as the Connaught men, and they do not seem to have the same amount of zest and natural go in them. As a class they live better in Connaught, and although their houses are very small they are much cleaner. The occupants of the small holdings live fairly well. They have tea and milk in a great many cases, and are very fond of bacon and manage to grow a few vegetables. Bacon and vegetables seem to be all they want and they consume a great quantity of tea (1 lb. to 1½ lb. per week). Oats are largely used for feeding purposes, and the people consume a good deal themselves, not so much now I am sorry to say, it was better food than what they are eating at the present time. Of about 250 people on one property of mine, all are in England except the old fathers and mothers. Some of them have been going for 20 years to the same place, they come back later in the season. Emigration is almost entirely to the States, and unfortunately they stick in the cities out there. Agricultural wages have risen about 30 %.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Cottage accommodation in Connaught is the worst possible. I proposed that we should take advantage of the Act and get proper cottages built such as labourers ought to have, but could not get a second. I intend to try again but it is very hard to do anything. In Connaught they will not put the Act in force generally because they are afraid of adding to the rates, but the houses the Congested Districts Board have built are a great credit to them and are well kept, and the people are doing very well. In Leinster they have done well enough in building cottages, but have built them too small with only a ground floor.

626 Education.

We have had no advantages from improved agricultural education, except so far as Sir Horace Plunkett's scheme is concerned. There are travelling inspectors who come and give demonstrations—for instance, in butter-making. Some of us think we could make butter ourselves a great deal better, and indeed show them how to do it.

Taxation and
Population.

The population of Ireland is diminishing, the burden of taxation increasing, as the following figures will show. In 1838 the taxation of Ireland was £6,500,000 and the population 7,397,000; that is 16s. 3d. per head. In 1845 the taxation was £7,200,000 and the population 8,295,000, or 17s. 4d. per head; whereas in 1905 taxation amounts to £14,325,000 and the population is only 4,400,000, or £3 5s. per head.

Co-operation and
Railway Rates.

We have no such thing as market organisation and no improvements at all in the means of carriage by railway. The co-operative system of buying and selling has been tried in a few places but has not succeeded, through no fault of the scheme, but it has been badly worked; it has not been co-operation in the proper sense, rather a speculation by individuals. Carriage is very high. To get a ton of stuff from Dublin costs about 10s, and on the Continent only 5s. for the same distance.

Woollen Factories.

We are in the very unfortunate position that we have no factories. There is plenty of money to be made out of factories in Ireland, especially woollen factories. The Galway sheep's wool fetches a little higher price than most English. I sold a lot of wool this year at 13d. and have made 2s. 4d. years ago; 13d. was the highest price realised at the sales this year and at present the value of Irish wool in Bradford is 1s. I myself would like to build a woollen factory to-morrow, but I can get no lease from the landlord, and cannot form a company or build. There is water-power enough round Dublin and Galway to drive any quantity of machinery, but it is simply wasted; in other countries it would be employed at once, but in Ireland it is bound up with so many interests that it is impossible to find out who it belongs to. Mr. Smith of Athlone, 20 years ago, employed only 12 men making tweeds, now he employs 750 and is said to be making about £10,000 a year out of it; he even gave all the spare machinery to his own foreman and set him up. He also had other mills, and there is another factory in the town of Galway which is paying 7½ % this year.

627

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals leave the Colonies as much our competitors as before. So far as Ireland is concerned, the only grain coming from Canada that should be taxed is oats; the competition is serious and has destroyed our trade; 10 years ago it was fairly good, now I can buy Canadian oatmeal at my own door cheaper than I can make it. A duty should be put on German goods. The proposed duties would benefit England as a manufacturing country more than Ireland. The most important branch of agricultural industry at the present time is milling. If milling could be revived in Ireland it would be a great advantage. A very substantial duty on imported flour would re-start it. As good flour and better can be made from Indian wheat than from American. As an example of the effect of Canadian competition on the milling of oats; I used to sell myself 400 or 500 tons in a year; I cannot sell 100 now and have 2 mills closed; last year I bought all my oatmeal from Canada. I do not entirely approve of the proposals; the Colonies should pay as well, let them have preference in meat and dairy produce, but not grain. We in Ireland are too poor to be generous; we have hardly a market left in England and have no money. If store cattle were re-admitted it would make all the small holders bankrupt. They are very nearly that already, but that would finish them. I approve of the law as far as it goes at present. The proposal to put 5 % duty on all meat coming from foreign countries and also on dairy produce would be an advantage.

628

WITNESS No. 122.

MR. P. E. MEREDITH

(Farmer and Grazier, Clara Hill, Mountmellick, Queen's County).

I have not had great personal experience as a farmer, but am generally acquainted with the agricultural situation of the district round me. I have been engaged in farming for the last 9 years myself. I grow corn and root crops, and buy and sell cattle. I hold 1,000 statute acres of land, 80 in meadowing, 50 of corn and turnips, the rest is grazing and some of it bog and waste; the waste would be about 100 acres, not much good for grazing; all the rest is fairly good. Of grain crops barley is the chief. The sample has not exactly declined but the yield has very much; we are not treating our land quite so well. I buy my cattle and only rear occasionally. Stores this year (1905) were worth 30s. per cwt. live weight, £12 10s. or £13 a head going in. I buy them by hand or by the bullock, not by live weight.

It is very difficult to make a profit, the industry is not flourishing, and tillage, growing corn, is the least profitable; it is extremely hard with tillage to make ends meet, but cattle feeding requires a certain amount of it. Farming in none of its branches has been remunerative within the last 9 years; to manage to keep one's head above water is to be very lucky. Not much is to be made out of feeding cattle taking all the costs into consideration. The cost of labour and the low price of produce are increasing the difficulties of agriculture, and are their main and principal causes. The fall in prices has increased emigration, and the great change for the worse in the seasons may have something to do with it, but to the fall in prices the majority of the lesser evils may be attributed. I began, and have continued, to farm under unfavourable circumstances, if anything it is rather worse now than when I began. Profits have considerably decreased in proportion to the acreage farmed. The price of barley has so fallen that it is hardly worth growing, and the yield in recent years has considerably diminished. I have known only 6 to 8 barrels (16 stone to a barrel) of saleable corn per acre. This, at 14s. 6d. to 15s. at the most per barrel, is a poor return for tilling, seeding, cutting, thrashing and carting to market, not to speak of rent and taxes. Barley is often a very difficult commodity to dispose of, as if it is the least inferior maltsters will not buy, and certain large firms control and cut down the price; if it was any lower farmers would cease growing barley altogether, indeed several hitherto large growers within the past 3 or 4 years have given it up. I grew wheat the year before last and had a fair yield, but at 18s. a barrel of 20 stone there was no profit, rather the reverse.

State of
Agriculture.

This locality is principally tenanted by small farmers who look a great deal to the barley crops as a means of paying rent, &c. Their land is fairly well manured, but it does not yield grain crops as it used to at all. The holdings vary from 3 or 4 up to 10, 15, or 20 acres; 30 would be about the maximum. They grow barley, oats and potatoes, keep cows and feed beasts; 2 or 3 cows on a 20-acre farm for their own use only. A 4 or 5-acre farm would have only one cow. There are several bulls around, but bad ones; there may be an occasional well-bred bull, but one often has to send a long way to it and they will not take the trouble to do that; the fee varies from 2s. to 2s. 6d. The cows are selected for their milking qualities. These very small farmers use Indian meal for cattle food, it used to be a very staple food for themselves, but it is not used to any extent at all now. They all keep pigs and sell them, that is about the best thing they have. They do not eat their own pork except on very rare occasions, but buy American bacon for their own use. The price of pigs has been going up lately to 40s. and 45s. a cwt., sometimes 50s.; they have been selling well for the last 2 years, but before that they were very bad. Even in the hands of these small farmers the land under plough is diminishing, they graze or meadow it, and there is a good deal of waste with nothing on it. They plough with brood mares or colts. They breed strong horses, and generally rear the colts, but sometimes sell them.

Small Holdings.

Labour is very scarce, though my men live on my own land and I always have a certain number. The greater part of the farmers in my district farm their land themselves and have their own help, but when extra hands are required they are difficult to get. The holdings are nearly all small, and the tenants and their families (they are all tenants) till the soil, and consequently have no labour bill to meet. They are about the only ones nowadays who can make a living out of land, and do fairly well. The reign of the gentleman farmer is at an end.

Labour.

All my labourers have cottages on my own land, and want of cottage accommodation has nothing to do with the scarcity of labour. There is plenty of accommodation for the labourers around.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Poor rates have increased. The rates are collected differently from what they used to be. There used to be a poor rate and a country rate collector, but they are collected together now, and amount to more than before. Any rebate I may receive is absorbed by the increase in the rates. I am paying as high rates now as 5 years ago. Rates are a burden and always will be, and, to anyone whose valuation is large, a heavy burden.

Local Rates.

On my 600 Irish acres, and putting the bad land with the good, these are as follows: rent 16s. 8d., labour 10s., feeding stuffs 3s., manure 4s., machinery 2s., taxes all 3s. per acre.

Annual
Outgoings.

Railway rates are very high—too high. I am only 50 miles from Dublin and yet carriage (haulage included) adds nearly 10s. per ton to the price of artificial manure, feeding stuffs, &c. My markets are Mount Mellick, 6 Irish miles, and Tullamore, 8 miles distant. I very seldom send produce to market by rail, and am not specially affected by railway rates except by the carriage of manure, &c. There is a canal near my land, but it is not in competition with the railway. The canal rate is a trifle lower, but not much.

Railway Rates.

WITNESS No. 123.

MR. J. W. MURPHY

(Farmer, Hill House, Cashel, Tipperary).

I farm 300 to 500 acres, besides managing other large farms.

The climate is against tillage and grass. General farming works best, because the price of corn is bad and tillage is expensive, but barley has been paying well in good seasons, fetching 12s. to 14s. if fit for malting and 5s. to 10s. if unfit. Wheat is grown mostly by small farmers, who send it to the mills and use the straw for thatching. Very much land formerly in tillage has gone to grass. Large tillage farms have been half reduced, with the object of saving the cost of labour and because there was no profit. They only till now what is necessary to carry on their farms. Rents have been much reduced by the Land Commission, but the great fall in prices makes business unprofitable through foreign competition. Ireland will be a very shaky security for money advanced by Government if the value of land falls any lower. This will stop the sale of land to tenants. There is a bad return in oats: price in 1901 was 9s. 6d.; 1902, 9s.; 1903, 7s. 9d.; 1904, 8s. 6d. to 8s. 8d. Oats and barley average crop is 12 to 15 barrels per acre. Whether we produce corn or cattle we are outdone by foreign competition, which began 15 or 20 years ago.

State of
Agriculture.

633 Imported Horses.

Epizootic lymphangitis was one of the diseases brought from South Africa by the Government horses. All horses with this disease have to be shot and cremated. The Army Veterinary Department advised the Government to leave these horses behind, but they came here and this horrid disease has been very detrimental to the horse trade. For 3 months the horse may work well and feed well, all the time spreading disease.

Labour.

Labour is very expensive and very scarce, except near towns where women can be got for harvest and light work.

Wages.

Wages are much higher than 12 or 14 years ago.

Railway Rates.

The Great Southern and Western gives through rates on the new railway into Cashel, and takes cattle by passenger trains. The railways allow farmers to combine to make up a load of pigs to be carried at the same rate. The farmer brings his pigs to the nearest railway station. They are marked by an agent and sent to the bacon merchant, and the full value is sent direct to the farmer. Formerly he took them to local fairs and markets and sold to jobbers.

Education.

There is no visible appearance of improvement in technical education, but what has been done is in the right direction.

634

Cottage Accommodation.

Many cottages are built but the Act has not been fairly administered. A district council is approached by a man who fixes where he wants a cottage, and his friends advocate it being built there though he may not work on that farm. The cottage ought to be where he works. Properly administered the Act would be very good if the land provided with the cottage were limited to half an acre. This year applications are made to increase to an acre, which will be a great expense to the Union, taking down fences round the half-acre and moving them out, to the detriment of the land and its owner. Labourers with half an acre have as much as they can utilise. With an acre they would till their own land in spring when we most require them. Six cottages are round my farm and 2 on my land, but there is only 1 labourer to be had, and for 3 years I have been trying in vain to get more. I believed that the Act would facilitate cultivation. If cottages are built on my land I should have a prior claim on the cottagers' labour if I give them the same wages as others. I was prepared to pay well for certain work but they got lighter labour from road contractors and I cannot get my work done. The labourer has no horses and would have to ask the farmer for a pair if he wanted any to work his land.

New Zealand Methods.

New Zealand lamb is the best lamb in the London market. New Zealand labourers are paid well, and they work the land on a large scale with machinery and plough immediately before sowing the corn, giving the land 1 preparation, whereas we must give 2 or 3 in bad seasons, therefore costing us more.

635

Local Rates.

The following figures from the secretary of our County Council give the rates for 7 districts for 1900 and 1905:—

Rural District.	Agricultural Land.		Other Hereditaments.	
	1900. s. d.	1905. s. d.	1900. s. d.	1905. s. d.
Slievurdagh	3 1	2 7	5 2	4 7
Carrick-on-Suir	2 4	1 11	3 10	3 5
Cashel	2 1	1 9	3 8	3 4
Clogheen	3 0	2 1	4 9	3 11
Clonmel	2 9	2 4	4 8	4 3
Tipperary	1 8	2 5	3 5	4 2
Gortnahoe	2 1	1 8	4 10	3 4

636

Annual Outgoings.

Rent, 16s. per acre; labour, £1 2s.; feeding stuffs, 4s.; manure, 4s.; machinery, &c., 15s.; rates and taxes, 2s. 6d.; interest on £250 loan for improvements, 3s.

Duties.

If imported fat cattle, beef, and corn are not taxed, land in this country will be valueless. We work for nothing if there is no tax on foreign produce. The importation of store cattle would be our ruin. The raising of store cattle is our chief business now, and the risk of bringing in disease will follow if cattle are imported. The import of Canadian cattle means a loss of over £2 a head to the home producer of 3-year-old fat beasts. Foreign produce should be taxed, and foreign meat, &c., branded so that the difference could be seen. If we produce the best we ought to get credit for it. It might induce us to fully fatten more of our stock, and that would mean more profit, more employment, and more demand for all sorts of feeding stuffs which might be manufactured here. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would give more employment, and the numerous local mills in Ireland could work again. There is no profit for the small millers now. Not only flour mills, but also woollen mills which could be a great and profitable home industry, are lying idle at present because of foreign competition. There is much excellent water-power in Ireland, and, although the machinery of the mills is out of date, if it was made worth while to get in new machinery they could be worked to advantage. Peat litter should now be a great industry on account of the high price of straw, but Germany with our free imports is cutting us out. The Government should encourage the working of the Irish peat bogs.

WITNESS No. 124.

MR. EDWARD MIALl NUNNELEY

(Farmer, Orlingbury, near Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, representing the minority of the Northamptonshire Chamber of Agriculture).

I am prepared to give evidence on general farming—principally corn growing and rearing of stock—not so much feeding. I farm 896 acres, 471 arable and 418 grass. I have held the Home Farm, where I live, 27 years. The other part, 550 acres, I took about 10 years ago. I farmed 10 years before that on another farm.

The bad time for corn growing began about 1879, which was the worst year I have ever experienced, and the only year in which I positively lost money by farming. The past year, compared with 1879, as regards corn growing was very little better, but wheat and barley were rather better. I am selling my wheat at 4s. a quarter more than I did last year. I believe my average last year was 28s., and up to the present this year it has been 32s. From 1879 to 1887 was a series of bad years, with constant wet seasons, except 1883 and 1885, and a great fall in prices. That was a very bad time indeed, not only for corn growers, but for farmers generally. Since 1887, prices have risen slightly and things have improved. We have had better seasons for the last 10 years.

State of
Agriculture.

638

Rents have been very materially lowered, we have cut down other expenses and have been able fairly to meet the times. I took my Home Farm at 36s. an acre. The rent is now, and has been for several years, 16s. an acre. That would be more than the average reduction, mine being an exceptionally bad farm to meet the times. In 1894 I took another 550 acres, and the rent of that has been reduced practically as much. I pay 15s. an acre, and I know that some of it, 25 years ago, was let at over 42s. not all of it, as there is some poorer land with it. This great fall in rent is due to the low prices. There have been far more failures among shoemakers and builders than there have been amongst farmers. During the last 10 years agriculture in Northamptonshire has not been specially depressed and is not depressed now. My balance sheet comes out better for me now than it did when I was paying the high rents.

Rents.

If there is any decent farm to let there are 25 applicants for it, and even the poorer land can be let at a fair rental. Mine is considered some of the poorest land in the district. The lowest rent that has been reached, so far as I know, is 3s. 6d. an acre, near Thrapston. There are 500 or 600 acres. I know the tenant, and I believe he is doing very well. Possibly it is under-let. It is poor land, principally grass, on which he goes to very little expense, buying low-priced stock and selling them again. There is a fair quantity of grass in that district. In a parish or two round me there is more ploughed land than grass, but taking Northamptonshire generally, there is more grass than ploughed.

Profits.

Labour has been a little short until this last year. The best quality is not very abundant now, but we have never had any very serious difficulty. Much of the labour we can get now is the casual labour which has been thrown out of work in towns. That is not very satisfactory. There is not much difference in the labourers now and 40 years ago. They want a little more liberty and leave off earlier on Saturdays, and the young men almost always take their Saturday afternoons for cricket, &c. The quality of the labour in all respects is pretty much what it has been. I have one or two labourers who have worked on my farm since I took it 27 years ago. One man worked for me before that, and came with me to that farm. As a rule my labourers stay with me. I seldom lose a man except by death. I have lost a good many young fellows from 16 to 20. They go off to the towns, but when once a man marries, and settles down, he seldom leaves. During the last 15 years there has never been a single agricultural labourer out of work in my parish. Some who went to the towns a few years ago, and have come back again, are at present out of work, but of our own labourers there is not one out of work now. Wages have hardly altered at all for the last 15 years. I am paying the same as I did in 1888 or 1889. We raised them then to 14s. a week.

Labour.

639

We are not deriving any additional advantage from the Education Act. A little more might be done in the way of fitting the labourers for their country life, and interesting them in country affairs, but I do not complain much of that. I am not one of those who complain about over-education. The better educated a man is the more useful he is to me.

Education.

We gained some advantage by the Agricultural Rates Act. I have reaped the whole benefit, as my landlords have not raised the rent. Naturally in new tenancies it is taken into consideration by both the landlord and tenant; but with existing tenancies the benefit has gone to the farmer. I do not altogether approve of the Act—it gives most relief to the best land that needs it least—but till we get something better in the shape of a reform in our local taxation, I am certainly in favour of it being renewed. It is only justice to the landed interest, and it has been a benefit to the farmer, generally speaking. I attach very great importance to the Act in the tenant-farmers' interest. On that I am at one with the bulk of the farmers, but not at one with the party I generally go with. I am not afraid to say so either. In spite of the Act land still bears an undue proportion of the burden of taxation, but not to a very serious extent. While it is in force it nearly balances matters.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

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I hold very strongly that our railways ought not to be allowed to give a preferential rate to foreign goods. The bulk of my corn (except what we sell to local millers) goes into the Black Country, and it costs just as much to take my corn 50 miles to Birmingham, as it does to bring foreign corn 140 or 150 miles.

Railway Rates.

Local Rates have been less burdensome till this last year. The Education Rate last year put 5d. in the £ on the rural rate; and next year I am told it will be 7d. or 8d. There is no limit to it, it may be 1s. in the future. Some of the towns pay less than formerly, but the rural districts pay more, as the rate is spread over the whole county, and each locality is not rated separately. Our rural districts, as separate from Urban districts, find from 60 to 65 per cent. of the scholars; but we have to pay from 75 to 80 per cent. of the rate. That is putting aside altogether the fact that in most of our rural parishes the schools were previously kept

Local Rates.

641 Local Rates
—continued.

up at very little expense—a contribution from the farmers of 10s. or £1 once a year was enough. Now those rates cost me £10 per annum. It will cost me in the future £10 to £20 per annum more than I ever paid before. I am now taking the agricultural land as being rated at half its rateable value. The same thing applies with reference to main roads. Our main roads cost us £25,000 to £30,000 per annum. Until this Rates Act the rural districts paid $\frac{2}{3}$ of that rate; but only $\frac{1}{3}$ of the money was spent in these districts: $\frac{1}{3}$ went into the urban districts and to keep up our town footpaths. The rates are about the same in the £ as when I commenced farming, but I pay on a little more than half the rateable value, as that decreased with the rent.

Outgoings

On the average of the years 1901-3 rent is 15s. 3d. per acre. Labour costs 16s. per acre; feeding stuffs, cake, &c., costs 9s. per acre, maize, bran and meal, 3s., making together 12s. I use practically no artificial manure, not more than 2 tons of superphosphates per annum. Machinery and implements, including repairs, amount to 3s. 8d. per acre. Rates and taxes were about 1s. 1d. Last year they were about 1s. 3d.; and I expect in future they will be more owing to the Education Rate.

Duties.

I have considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals very carefully. I understand he proposes a 2s. duty on foreign corn except maize, with a preference to the Colonies. If Colonial corn is to come in free, one could imagine nothing more disastrous to farmers. It would cause a sharp rise of 2s. a quarter on the corn at first. That would in all probability be followed by a rise in our rents. If the landlords have to pay 10 per cent. more for all they buy they will require their 10 per cent. more from the rents, and I think justly. Mr. Chamberlain says there will be more employment for men. If so, we shall have to pay higher wages, and 10 per cent. more on machinery, &c. We would suffer far more from these proposals than from a general scheme of protection all round against the Colonies as well as against foreign countries. In a few years the Colonies, especially Canada, would increase their production and would send as much as we required, and the prices would fall lower than they are even now. I did not find a sharp rise in price in the English corn after the duty was imposed, but I suppose all practical agriculturists know how we were situated at that time. The 1s. duty, as it happened, came when we had a particularly bad harvest, and when our wheat was of very poor quality and could not compete with the foreign corn. Our millers were giving 7s. and 8s. more a quarter for the foreign corn than they would give me for mine. This year my corn is as good as the foreigners', and they are giving me as much as they are giving for the foreign corn. It is true that wheat is constantly rising and falling more than 2s. a quarter, and rents do not change with it when it is only a fluctuation for a few months. But the 2s. duty on corn, which would mean a permanent rise of that amount, would bring about a rise in rent. If wheat went up 1s. or 2s. a quarter permanently the landlord would raise the rent of his farm. Rents rise or fall according to the value of the produce. I took my farm 25 years ago at 36s. an acre, because at that date wheat was at an average of about 60s. Prices have come down and rent has been reduced again and again until it has come down to 16s. That shows that rents follow prices. I do not mean to say that every landlord would raise the rents immediately. The sitting tenant on a good estate would reap the benefit of the rise for some years, perhaps as long as the same tenant remains; but as soon as there is a reletting of the farm or a readjustment of the rents then the bulk of the advantage would go to the landlord; and I do not say it is wrong. I do not mean that by a fluctuation in the market the rents rise or fall, but if there is a permanent rise in the price of my produce that would be followed by a permanent rise in rents, the same as the permanent fall in the price of our produce has been followed by the permanent fall in our rent. This rise in the price of corn would not be permanent, but it would be sufficiently long to get a rise in rents generally. If there was a permanent rise the bulk of that would go to the landlords in increased rent. If the rise is not sufficiently permanent to cause rents to go up, it would not benefit the farmer more than for the time being.

Effect on Rent.

Effect on Labour.

The labourer would also suffer. The effect of the duties would be extremely prejudicial to agriculture generally, and the labourer would share in that injury. The duties on manufactured articles would cause less work in the towns, fewer of our men would drift to the towns, and in that way we should have more labour. There would also be more men out of work in the towns and they would come into the country and lower the price of labour. The labourer would suffer at the same time through increase in the cost of his food and other necessities. If there was more employment for labour at better wages I, as a farmer, would suffer because I should have to pay more for my labour.

Effect on Bread.

When wheat rises and falls, as it perpetually does, 2s. a quarter, the price of bread does not always change with it. If wheat is under a certain price, bakers sell the loaf at 4d. When it goes above that price they raise the price $\frac{1}{2}$ d., even if it is only 6d. or 1s. above. It may be 1s. rise will just turn the point at which they can raise the price. It may take 4s. to do it, and the same in going down. The price of bread will not go down sometimes at 1s. and sometimes not at 3s. drop. I should say it takes a 4s. rise to raise the price of bread $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Effect on Stock
and Offals.

A 5 per cent. rise in meat would be a gain to me. I believe the price of stock would rise. From a duty on flour as distinct from wheat I should gain very little indeed. The fact of the grinding being done in this country and there being a much larger production of offals would be no material advantage to me. I use a few tons of bran in the year which I should get a few shillings cheaper. It would not make £5 difference to me. I grind all my own offal corn, so that I buy very little offal.

Effect on Farming.

It would not involve any material change in my system of farming if a preferential arrangement were made with the Colonies, unless you raised the price of corn materially—not a 2s. duty but a 5s. or a 10s. duty. If we have a duty at all we must have a 5s. or a 10s. duty. The farmer would not cultivate an acre more wheat for the sake of a 2s. duty.

Effect generally.

On the whole the country would suffer from the general scheme. I have been brought up as a free trader and I believe in it. It is just that. I would get rather more than 2s. an acre benefit from the whole scheme if the prices were raised to the extent that I anticipate. I make the gain come out at an average of £120 per annum; but against that I should lose about £205 a year. I have allowed in that for a 10 per cent. rise on the feeding stuffs; but Mr. Chaplin tells me that that is not contemplated. That would make a difference of £20. I have also allowed for a 10 per cent. rise in rent and rates, labour, implements and machines

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and repairs. Iron and steel would be made dearer, and then my blacksmith would charge me more. I do not think that these proposals of Mr. Chamberlain would affect my position very materially one way or the other. I should not advocate any scheme whereby a certain proportion of the funds received by the taxation of foreign articles could be allocated to relieve the burden of taxation on the land. That would seem to me too much like taxing the whole community for the benefit of the landed interest. All I want is fair play as between the land and the towns. I should certainly like fair play for the British farmer against the foreign farmer, and with reference to railway rates, that is a great point. The idea of a bounty would not commend itself to me, it would be rather worse than a duty. It would be only natural that if we had a 10s. bounty on all the wheat we grow the landlord would say "Why should you take that; I want it." If there is a general improvement in the price of agricultural produce that goes ultimately to the landlords. It is a perfectly legitimate thing and a tenant taking a farm calculates what his incomings will be, and pays his rent accordingly.

Bounties.

We might get a great advantage in an alteration of the law of Tenant Right. At present a bad landlord, or a sharp agent, can rob very materially a good tenant who desires to do his duty by the land to the last day of his tenancy. At the same time a bad tenant can, and very often does, rob a good landlord. I should like to see the law altered so that it would encourage a good tenant to farm his land well, up to the very day he leaves, by paying him fairly for doing so; and would stop the bad tenant robbing the good landlord, and a bad landlord robbing the good tenant. It is no use saying that we are not obliged to take a farm except on an agreement that is satisfactory to us. It would be no use my going to a large estate and saying I want this farm on my own terms. I should have to take the same agreement as the other tenants. I desire to see an alteration of the Agricultural Holdings Act to encourage farmers to farm their land well, and to give them more liberty. A tenant farmer on leaving his farm or on a readjustment of tenancy should be paid for everything he has done (without having to go to his landlord to get permission to do it) which adds to the letting value of the farm, and he should have to pay to his landlord for any depreciation which was at all due to his fault. Experienced valuers ought to be able to say whether a certain thing has added to the letting value of the farm or has not.

Tenant Right.

This and the incidence of local taxation are things as to which legislation would certainly do good, and where by simply giving us justice we should be helped materially.

WITNESS No. 125.

MR. C. F. PADDISON

(Farmer and Grazier, Ingleby & Canwick, Lincolnshire).

I grow meat, wool, and corn, and I farm 960 acres, half grass and half arable.

Agriculture is in a very bad condition. Farmers keep making assignments. Growing corn has paid the worst, the main reason being low prices, very bad seasons and small crops. The fall in prices began about 1874, and has gone on more or less steadily from that time to this. The best price I ever made on my wheat crop was in 1872, when it made 70s. to 71s. The lowest was 18s., 4 or 5 years ago. I had a better crop at 70s. than that at 18s. The highest price I ever made for barley was 56s., in a very exceptional year, that year my crop averaged nearly 50s.; in the worst year I made 24s. Barley varies very much in price; I have made as much as £2 within the last 10 years, but as a rule about 30s. a quarter. Profits in farming have fallen very much indeed. Beef varies, it has been nearly double present prices. Cattle have made 13s. a stone, now 6s. 6d. I breed and occasionally buy stores and feed most of the beasts I breed myself. Mutton has not varied so much. The highest price for mutton I have known was 11d. or 1s. a lb., and the lowest about 6d.; it depends upon whether the wool is upon the sheep. Just now we are making a fair price of the sheep; they have been much lower. In the good times of 1863 the first wool I sold made 69s. a tod (28 lbs.), now it is worth about 26s., and has been as low as 14s. Ewes' wool was only worth 10s. in the spring of 1903. During this period there has been a considerable reduction in rent in consequence, about half on an average. I attribute this change in the condition of agriculture to foreign competition and to bad seasons. By foreign competition I mean the fall in prices it has produced.

State of Agriculture.

Wages have varied. I have known them higher, but I have known them very much lower. The average of the last 10 years has been higher than the average of any 10 years that I can remember.

Wages.

We are very badly off for cottage accommodation at Canwick. Plenty at Ingleby. Some of my labourers live in the villages, some in Lincoln, about a mile away, some in Heighington and Branston—nearly 3 miles.

Cottage Accommodation.

The Ingleby farm is my own property. Labour amounts to 30s.—I calculate on the whole farms. Feeding stuffs nearly £1 10s. I use a good deal of cake. Manure is small—2s. an acre, and machinery is very small, 6d. per acre would cover new machinery; repairs cost more. Rates 2s. 6d. an acre, and taxes 1s. 6d. The landlord pays land tax and income tax at Canwick.

Annual Outgoings.

Railway rates do not affect us very much. We have water carriage in competition, and I am fairly satisfied with our means of carriage.

Railway Rates.

The Agricultural Rates Act reduced rates and taxes considerably, but since it was passed there has been a gradual increase, partly owing to the Education Act, and partly because the District and County Councils all want money. The rates on agricultural land handicap us very severely; the land bears far more than its just burden of taxation. If we were put upon a footing of equality with the foreigner there would be no fear of our being able to compete with him, especially if our land were as free from taxation as his. It is said that in New Jersey, U.S.A., the occupiers only pay about 1d. an acre in rates and taxes, a very great advantage over us.

Local Rates.

649 **Agricultural
Rates Act.**

As owner I get the whole advantage of the Agricultural Rates Act, and it is generally so, there are very few exceptions; rents have gone down and it may sometimes have been taken into consideration when a reduction has been made.

Duties.

The effect of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will not be very great. A heavier duty on flour than on wheat would benefit us because we should get cheaper offals. Bran and offals are very dear now because the importation of these is very small compared with that of foreign flour. As there is so much corn grown in virgin soil that does not require any manure there ought to be an import duty to counteract the effect of that. The relief of taxes upon agricultural land would be a greater benefit than a 2s. tax upon corn. The duty on barley ought to be more than on wheat. I grow very little wheat and that mostly for the straw, so that a duty of 1s. or 2s. on wheat is not a matter of very much importance, but if it raises the price, which I doubt, I would grow more wheat. It would be a great advantage if malting barley alone was taxed, with a reduction of the beer duty at the same time, and food barley free, if it could be done. There is no objection to low quality barley coming in free; it is the malt barley that we have to compete with. In an ordinary season foreign barley makes so much a quarter more than ours that it drives us off the market with our fine barley. Bass's have only bought a small amount of barley at Lincoln this year; sometimes they have bought ten times as much. If a tax was laid on all foreign barleys that went into the kiln there would be no difficulty about the distinction between malting and feeding. Maize should not be taxed, it does not come much into competition with beans. A tax upon bacon would not make much difference. We do not grow so much bacon as beef, mutton and lamb. New Zealand mutton competes with us more than American bacon. Dairy produce is not a matter of great importance to me, or to Lincolnshire generally. I have a great objection to the admission of any live cattle. We have suffered so much from foot and mouth and cattle plague that it has frightened me. These diseases have done us much more harm than pleuro-pneumonia. I am opposed to the re-admission of any of these animals into the interior of the country on the ground of disease. I have no objection to dead meat under certain conditions; the 5% tax upon it would be good for us. Colonial preference would be better for the Colonies, but it would not make much difference to us, and would not affect our present methods of cultivation.

650 **Live Cattle.****Preference.****WITNESS No. 126.****COLONEL ROLLESTON**

(Farmer, Watnall Hall, Nottingham, representing the Nottingham Agricultural Society).

**State of
Agriculture.**

651 I farm 130 acres myself, light arable and grass. In recent years corn growing has suffered very much from low prices. Much corn land has gone down to grass, but not the best. We are obliged to use it for the rotation of crops. The limestone land where I live is still used in rotation. It pays as well as anything. With the straw they can eke out a living in the rotation of crops as well as in any other way. The grass has very much depreciated. They do not breed very much, though that pays better. They grow potatoes to a moderate extent, that pays better than sheep with us because it is a very thickly populated district. Profits in proportion to acreage farmed have decreased on the whole, perhaps not within 5 years; but considerably during the last 10.

I date the bad time from 1875. The fall in prices began about the same time. In 1875 the wet seasons began, and the farmers had great difficulty in gathering the harvest, and generally it was quite unfit for the miller. The foreign wheats then took the place of ours. 1879 was the very wet year—that was the most disastrous year.

Labour.

As regards labour, there is great difficulty, partly because it is a colliery country which puts up price and diminishes the amount, and the men go into the towns, not so much to the railways, as to the collieries. The quality of the labour has got worse. The education they get makes the lads more fit for clerks and town work than for agriculture. The general opinion in my district is that there are not so many thoroughly good workmen skilled in thatching, ditching, &c., as formerly. It has got into the hands of aged men, or those who are getting old, but who still remain on the farm where they have cottages. The skilled men are fast dying out, and the others are going into the towns.

Wages.]

652 The rate of wages in our district has risen in recent years and also the amount paid to the individual, but agricultural wages are in a very artificial state because of the competition with the collieries. When land has gone down to grass the volume of the wages has declined though the individual gets 1s. or 2s. more.

**Cottage
Accommodation.
Education.**

Cottage accommodation is not a difficulty.

It would be a great advantage if we could increase the education of the people in agricultural matters. Our County Council gives special facilities for agricultural teaching, there is a very good school and it is growing. Young boys take to it, if they get the chance, but it applies more to older youths of better class. They have practical illustrations in farming operations, especially dairy farming. There are very good dairy farmers in Nottinghamshire.

Local Rates.

Local rates and taxes are very burdensome on land. Being an Urban district there are a great many improvements carried out at considerable expense which do not benefit the land. The rates have been growing very much the last 4 or 5 years. The amount of the Education Rate is 6d., it is not likely to rise, for it is very well managed in Nottingham. The farmers do not complain much of that in our district, they complain of the rates altogether.

Duties.

A duty on corn of 2s. a quarter, and Colonial corn free would help the farmer to a certain extent. It is not a protective duty. It would not do any harm. As to meat, a very good farmer wrote to me to say that 2s. a stone on meat would be required to do much good in that direction. He was against any change. As to dairy produce, the Nottinghamshire Dairy Farmers' Club wrote to me under date February 4th, 1905:—

"I enclose a note of the result of the debate the Notts. Dairy Farmers' Club would like to place in evidence before the Tariff Commission through you. It is important to remember that many farmers grow so little corn that they will get little or no advantage from any increase in the prices obtained for home-grown corn—they would have to pay the tax and get increased price to meet their loss. One gentleman present said that when the 1s. duty was put on, that 1s. was added to undelivered parts of his contracts, and he had to pay 45s. more than he had contracted to pay, in this case the consumer had to pay, &c."

This is the formal minute:—"A Meeting of the Council of the Notts. Dairy Farmers' Club held February 4th, 1905, desires to express its opinion that the Fiscal proposals of Mr. Chamberlain will not benefit dairy farmers as a class unless all imported cattle foods (including linseed, cotton seed, maize, rice, meal and wheat offals and cattle foods manufactured from any of these), are exempt from duty, because dairy farmers, whose holdings are principally grass, are almost without exception much larger purchasers of foreign feeding stuffs than sellers of home-grown corn. A minority of the Council considered that power should be given to the Government to impose retaliatory duties on imported manufactures which compete with home manufactures."

If agricultural land could be relieved of a great many of the burdens it has now, the scheme would be of great service to the farmer. I think the farmers, except the dairy farmers, of our district would like a tax on cake and feeding stuffs.

WITNESS No. 127.

Mr. JOHN ROWELL

(Farmer, Bury, nr. Huntingdon, representing the Huntingdonshire Agricultural Society).

My holding is about 400 acres grass and 1,100 arable. I keep all kinds but do not go in for pedigree stock, except Shire and Hackney horses. The others are as well-bred as we can get them on the male side, but not pedigree on the female side. The land I have now is not suitable for breeding. It is fen and high land, and part of the grass is liable to flooding by a stream that runs through it. We do not fold sheep so much as in some parts. We fed all over the land, especially grass. Except for roots we do not fold.

It is difficult to say which is our best arable crop; wheat should be, but the barley on our strong land used to be the best, but in consequence of the great fall in price we are turning to anything we can grow best. We used to work the four course system, but cannot make it answer so well now, particularly in the fen, where roots are very largely grown, and in some districts very little wheat. The poor high land is laid down to grass. There is nothing like the quantity of corn (wheat especially) grown that there used to be. The black fen land is good for market gardening where conveniently situated, and we use it a good deal for root growing. Even where it is a little distance from the station now we are obliged to turn to it to make the land pay. Potato and celery growing have been remunerative, but the last two years owing to bad seasons, foreign importations, disease, and consequent high price of seed, profits have been very much reduced. Potatoes are grown very extensively on the fen. The disease made its appearance this year (1904), and prices are low, it is not a good year. If I had not a great deal of stock, and also my special pedigree stock, I could not make the land pay. What prosperity there may be in my particular district and the adjacent counties depends, and has depended for several years, to a very large extent on the potato crop. But for the root crop we could not farm that land. The potato crop also gives employment to about double the labour of the corn crop or grass. Anything that will tend to restrict the acreage of potatoes must still further denude the rural district of its population, therefore it is very important that the potato or any other crop employing a large amount of labour should be kept remunerative. Black land potatoes at present run from 35s. to 45s. a ton, or an average of 40s.; at that price the potato crop is not remunerative with the disease we are getting. If we were free from disease we could grow them at that price because we grow a big weight as a rule in the fen, but the disease attacks the fen potatoes very quickly and with it we cannot grow them at £2 a ton. There is a good deal of spraying done. Sometimes it seems to answer very well. I did not spray this past year myself, but a gentleman who did said that it did harm, as it kept the potatoes growing longer, and the disease seemed to get hold of them more before they were ready. The largest potato and root grower in our district told me that he had sprayed for several years and did not believe it was any good. Others, however, say it has done a great deal of good. Even with the low price for home produce of 40s. per ton, foreign potatoes are still being imported to the extent of about 1,000 tons per week. During the last two years our district has suffered very much and the profits on potatoes have been much reduced. Last year we suffered greatly from the importation of foreign potatoes, which kept down the prices of our own. Disease swallowed up half of the crop. The remaining part (there was not more than a half left in a good many districts) at a fair price would have been remunerative, but the foreigner came in and knocked it down to such a price that it was a dead loss. The importations of potatoes for about 8 months last year were from 10,000 to 20,000 tons per week.

A big item of expense on our clay land is under draining. 20 years ago it was all in splendid condition, and well drained, but the drainage is wearing itself out, and to re-drain the clay land, which is suffering more from want of it than anything else, would be a most difficult and expensive business. At present prices of produce it would not pay, if it could be done, and in the case of some of it it would not be an easy task. This land is laid down to very poor grass indeed. It would pay very much better to grow corn on it if corn brought fair prices. It will feed a little stock, but it will never produce any meat. It is very little good, but if it were ploughed up most of it would be useful land for corn growing. Some of the black fenland will feed and fatten cattle very well, but grass is not laid for long in it. We lay it for one year as a rule, and for two at most. One year seeds is very good for sheep. The change in the condition of agriculture is due to the low prices of produce, extra cost of production in labour and rates, and unfair railway charges as against foreign produce.

State of Agriculture.

Potatoes.

657 Horse breeding.

The horse-breeding branch of my business, Shires and Hackneys, has not been quite as profitable this last year or two as it used to be. Horse-breeding is not subject to foreign competition. The foreigners must come here for their sires. We can produce sires of all pure bred stock against the world, but after they leave us they seem to deteriorate, possibly from the effect of climate, they do not seem to keep their strength and stamina, and the foreigner must come back to us for fresh sires. For working purposes a great many horses have come from abroad, because they have not been bred largely enough in England. Working horses I feed on maize, but nothing else. One would not feed an animal that does not work hard on maize.

Labour.

The quality of the labour is not good. The labourers should take an interest in their work, but they do not, and the labour gets worse. The older men are the best, and when they have gone I do not know who is to replace them. The young men do not seem to wish to learn so as to take the place of the old ones. The supply of labour just in our district is better than it was 2 or 3 years ago. About 4 or 5 years back when the brickyards grew up very rapidly round Peterborough, they absorbed all the labour we had. Then the slump came in bricks, and we are better supplied with labourers than we were. But after the men have worked in brickyards, and in towns, they are no longer the labourers they were. The young men go off to the towns as they do everywhere else. In the fens as we have taken more to root growing we need a great deal of labour, but on other land, in some districts, the labour has been diminished very much indeed. Where a man keeps no stock he can farm with little labour by means of machinery; but where there is much stock they require a lot of attention if they are looked after properly.

658 Wages.

Our wages are higher than formerly. Our standard wage to-day is 14s. a week, but all the best of our men are earning from 15s. to 1 guinea a week. Many of the piece-work men are making 16s. to a guinea a week. I pay my horse-keepers, single men, 17s.; married men living on the farm, 14s. with house rent, firing, all the potatoes they want and their harvest, so that their wages are 19s. to a guinea a week all the year round. They do not work so many hours as they used to. The 14s. a week men do the least work for their money.

Cottage Accommodation.

We are fairly supplied with cottages in our villages. They are mostly old, but very comfortable, though there is very great room for cottage improvement. You cannot build a cottage fit for a labourer to live in under £150, and as the rent is never more than £4 or £5, private enterprise cannot build them. Pairs of cottages, or 2 or 3 together, with 3 bedrooms, will cost about £150 each.

Education.

From an agricultural point of view I consider the present system of education injurious. We have to educate the boys up to 14 at great expense, and the last 2 years they are at school they do not learn anything that will help them on the land. There are several boys in my little parish now who, if they went to school until they were 20 would not pass beyond a certain standard. If a lad is to take to anything, work on the land especially, he must begin it young. If he does not, he gets into a lazy, careless habit and never takes to it so well. It is only the dull boys that come on the land. The sharp, shrewd ones always make their way.

659 Co-operation.

I do not attach much importance to co-operative buying and selling. It is not of much use to a man who has the money to buy, for a business man can go on the market and buy as cheaply as any one the Co-operative Societies would employ. It would help the small holders if credit were given, but this the Societies may not do and the really poor man would only run into debt.

Local Rates.

The rates in two parishes I farm in are now nearly double what they were a few years ago. The education rate is a very heavy item. Our County Council is very extravagant.

Annual Outgoings.

Labour on the fen land will cost from 30s. to 45s. per acre, more where celery is grown very extensively, but on an ordinary farm of 400 to 500 acres, growing a fair proportion of potatoes, it will cost 45s. to do it well. On the high land the labour may be put at from 22s. to 35s. per acre. Where a lot of stock and sheep are kept it will cost 35s., it reaches this figure on my occupations. Some say they can do it at 22s., how I do not know. Feeding stuffs cost from 10s. to 27s. 6d. per acre. That is a very wide margin, but on the fens where potatoes are grown extensively, and artificial manure is used very largely indeed, there is not so much feeding stuff used. I put them at about 10s. an acre. A great deal of the straw is sold, so that it is not made into manure. When strong lands are well farmed they require all the yard manure obtainable. As much as 25s. to 30s. an acre for feeding stuffs may be reckoned, but the amount varies very much with different occupiers; one will spend much more on feeding stuffs than another, on both fen and high land. Artificial manure is much heavier on the fen land; generally where feeding stuffs are higher manure is so much lower. When all the straw is left on the land and made down well, it does not require very much. The barley and roots require but a very small amount, but on the fens where roots are grown, it will require a very great deal. Machinery and implements I put at 5s. an acre including upkeep, and there is room for a great deal of difference in that. On some farms the threshing tackle belongs to the farm, whilst on others the threshing is all put out. Rates and taxes run from 2s. to 3s. 2d. per acre.

660

Railway Rates.

The potatoes with which we have to compete in the southern markets of England come from France at a less rate than we can put them into those towns, and as compared with the charges the foreigner pays for carriage we are seriously handicapped. We continually have complaints with reference to rates. At a competitive station the rates are very much lower than at non-competitive ones. The railway companies have increased the rates in recent years and are more awkward to deal with than formerly. They will not listen to reason. At present an agitation, covering a very wide area, is going on near us against the companies. London is our principal market. Our French competitors pay less from the Continent to London than our rate of 7s 11d. for potatoes.

Foreign corn landed in this country is carried at a much cheaper rate than ours, which is equivalent to a duty on ours. A ton of hay can be brought from the middle of France to London for less money than we can send it from Peterborough to London.

Duties.

Agriculture under present conditions spells ruin to most concerned. It is impossible to grow corn, and the sooner a change comes, the better. It seems very hard that stuff we cannot produce has a big duty on it and on what we can produce there is no duty at all. If there is to be a duty it should be on something we can

661

produce. A heavy duty on flour and malting barley is needed. If flour came in in the form of wheat, to be ground in this country, we should get the offals, a very big item, for now we are buying our bran and offal almost at the price of wheat. The brewers would not lose the very fine bright qualities of barley by a heavy duty as they are bound to come in, and the duty paid on barley for malting purposes would raise the price of ours a little. At present our barley has gone down to such a price that in Norfolk the land is half under oats instead of barley now, and on our high land too we cannot afford to grow it. This year we have the best quality of barley we ever grew, and the maltsters and brewers come on the market and give us just what they like. Men who used to sell it at a good price have to take whatever they can get—28s. to 30s.—a quarter for best high land barley.

There is such a small profit on all crops grown that a small bounty on wheat would very much increase the acreage grown and the consequent employment. A bounty of 30s. to £2 an acre on wheat would in some districts nearly double the acreage, because it is just that £2 that would give the grower his profit. I am in favour of the taxation of maize because it is used for so many other purposes besides feeding. I do not think 2s. a quarter on wheat would have the effect of raising the price, but my own feeling has always been that I would rather see flour and barley for malting purposes taxed very heavily than wheat. A 1s. a quarter on wheat, a sort of market toll, would be very much better.

The proposed duties on manufactures would indirectly put more money into the pockets of the working men of England, and cause them to buy more agricultural produce. There would be more work, and if machinery cost us a little more for a time, a great deal more would be made in England, if it could not come from abroad. More factories would be opened in England, which are abroad to-day. I think it would help agriculture all round.

The labourer's present position will always give him a fair share in any improvement, and I do not think his cost of living would be increased.

Bounty.

662

WITNESS No. 128.

MR. B. B. SAPWELL

(Farmer, Sankence, Aylsham, Norfolk).

I have been farming for 31 years on arable land in Norfolk. I farm between 650 and 700 acres. I own about 320 acres and hire the remainder.

For a long time corn growing has been unprofitable, we have been depending on profit from fattening stock, what we call "grazing"—that is a Norfolk expression for fattening bullocks. In the last 3 or 4 years that also has become unprofitable; the competition is so great and the price of beef so low. This iniquitous keeping out of Canadian stores is our ruin. We have made Ireland prosperous to the ruin of Norfolk and Suffolk. We now get stores from Ireland, and they are very good. I keep 450 to 500 sheep. I buy 450 to 500 lambs in June and fold these on roots and green stuff. I shall sell 200 of them, probably, in January and the remainder will all be sold by the middle of March. I buy them as lambs and sell them when they are tegs (one year old). They have paid very well recently. They are our sheet anchor. We farm on the 4 course system—barley, wheat, hay and roots—and we make our manure on the farm, using in addition about £300 worth of artificial manure a year. Every one of my bullocks has a roof over its head, and the dung is all box and yard fed. We are high farmers in our neighbourhood. We think if high farming will not pay, low farming will not. The rent of the best land runs up to about 25s., including the tithe, but the land I hire is 10s. an acre. That is lighter land and is not capable of being farmed at a profit in spite of the low rent, so I am giving it up at Michaelmas. I have 332 acres for £180 a year, including 4 cottages, and the shooting. I let off the shooting on my own land and on this for £90, and yet with this additional income I do not believe it is possible, at present, to farm it at a profit. I get more for that land for the shooting than the profit on it as agricultural land, but it would be of no value for shooting unless it were cultivated. If it is not the game goes. Our land is entirely unsuitable for breeding. We have no water and very little of the land can be laid down to pasture profitably. We do not require water to fatten animals. No one ever gives box or yard-fed cattle water in winter.

State of Agriculture.

663

We have had the foot and mouth disease in Norfolk and lost much by it. But I am not afraid of disease by the importation of Canadian stores. They are the healthiest cattle in the world. I am aware that the disease was close on Canada a few months ago but that would not affect Canada. Cattle go from Canada to the States, but none go the other way. I am a member of the Cattle Diseases Committee of the Norfolk County Council. We have had several outbreaks and have stamped them out. We know how to deal with them. The breeders say they fear foot and mouth disease being imported. We graziers do not fear it, and I do not think the breeders fear it either—they fear the competition of the Canadian stores.

Foot and Mouth Disease.

664

On both my farms I expect to make every year about £1,000 increment on my stock, that is to say, to sell them for £1,000 more than they cost; and I should spend £300 or £400 a year on each farm in artificial manure. That would leave me some £600 at each farm, or about £1,200, for 140 acres of roots. In recent years £1,400 would be the total increment.

Profit.

We had a little trouble with regard to labour during the South African War but not now. What people say about labour deteriorating is all nonsense. I have many good labourers and have no fault to find with them. They are as good as ever. I have on my farm many old fences and I have raised several new ones with men who never raised a fence before. If you compare my new fences with the old, you will find the old ones wobbling about in every direction and the new ones as straight as a die. It always irritates me to hear people running down the labour.

Labour.

Everything we do is practically task work, so that a man can earn half as much again as his nominal wages. Many earn, the year round, quite 17s., and they work shorter hours. When they have earned 3s. a day they go home. They do not wish to earn more and they are right; the work is hard and when 3 o'clock

Wages.

665 Wages
—continued.

comes, they are tired. Men on barn work will earn 4s. a day. I have one or two men, good working chaps, who will stop and make a long day. If they have confidence that you are not going to take advantage of them, they will work hard and earn plenty of money. A friend of mine engaged a milkman the other day at 16s. a week and a cottage, and he said to my friend: "I assure you I am better off than I was in London at 35s. a week; in addition to that my health is better, my wife never had good health in London and she is better and my family, and in every way we are better."

Cottage
Accommodation.

I have built very nice cottages on my place; they all have 3 rooms upstairs, and good gardens. I pay rates and taxes and do the repairs, and charge 1s. a week. That is practically a bribe to get good men to stop with me, and naturally adds a bit to their wages. The public would cheerfully pay 2s. a week.

Foreign Competition.

While the foreigners can scratch the land and get a crop, they can beat us, but give us fair dealing and we can beat them. At the present time there is no labourer in the world like an Englishman at 12s. a week. There is no land like the English for agricultural purposes; there is no climate like that of England. Only give us a chance.

Education.

All the best men I have had have been totally without education. My old steward, who has retired, could neither read nor write. My present steward is really a clever fellow. He told me he never could get out of the Second Standard, yet he can measure up an irregular field in a short time, and never makes a mistake in figures. It is all very well to have education and to have men like those at Cambridge to tell you such and such manures are suitable for certain soils; but the more you educate the agricultural labourer the more you make him have a distaste for the land, instead of a liking for it. I do not like to admit it, but I am afraid that education instead of improving the status of agriculture would render it worse than it is to-day.

666

Outgoings.

The following tables show the balances of the accounts of my two farms:—

		(OWN) FARM.			
OUTGOINGS.		1899-1900	1900-1901	1901-1902	1902-1903
Valuation in March of first-named year .		£3,174 11 6	£3,377 12 0	£3,320 18 0	£3,431 7 0
Cake, corn and seed bought		691 12 2	771 4 11	636 16 8	531 19 9
Live stock bought		1,972 15 1	1,974 0 1	1,584 2 4	2,289 14 8
Manure bought		88 12 0	108 0 10	121 17 2	119 16 10
Tradesmen's bills		298 13 1	252 1 5	204 7 1	383 15 1
Rent, tithe, taxes, rates and insurance .		405 16 6	416 19 3	422 17 0	438 11 3
Labour		497 0 10	545 10 5	519 13 0	528 5 3
Profit		356 1 11	203 12 7	199 19 3	256 0 5
TOTALS		£7,485 3 1	£7,649 1 6	£7,010 10 6	£7,979 10 3

667

		INCOME.			
Corn sold		£610 13 4	£786 7 3	£701 19 4	£756 3 5
Dairy and Poultry		76 1 9	70 10 5	78 17 6	78 3 0
Miscellaneous		51 11 2	78 15 5	68 0 0	36 11 7
Live stock sold		3,369 4 10	3,392 10 5	2,730 6 8	3,358 18 0
Valuation in March of last-named year..		3,377 12 0	3,320 18 0	3,431 7 0	3,749 14 11
		£7,485 3 1	£7,649 1 6	£7,010 10 6	£7,979 10 3

668

		(HIRED) FARM.			
OUTGOINGS.		1899-1900	1900-1901	1901-1902	1902-1903
Valuation in March of first-named year .		£2,791 7 0	£3,008 10 0	£2,938 15 6	£2,924 10 3
Cake, corn and seed bought		680 8 8	736 14 1	507 0 9	573 19 11
Live stock bought		1,332 18 0	1,323 7 0	1,082 2 6	1,573 7 2
Manure bought		146 5 0	125 0 0	165 0 9	130 1 9
Tradesmen's bills		196 5 1	145 0 3	183 8 10	197 9 0
Rent, taxes, rates and insurance ..		228 2 4	231 12 8	233 2 10	235 1 8
Labour		529 8 10	553 5 3	502 16 10	525 0 6
Profit		395 5 6	—	220 14 0	56 12 8
TOTALS		£6,300 0 5	£6,123 9 3	£5,833 2 0	£6,216 2 11

		INCOME.			
Corn sold		£710 8 1	£715 7 5	£684 18 2	£749 13 10
Poultry		51 12 0	53 6 2	45 1 9	32 17 5
Miscellaneous		223 17 8	254 16 9	149 1 10	106 10 2
Live stock sold		2,305 12 8	2,123 0 3	2,029 10 0	2,363 12 0
Valuation in March of last-named year .		3,008 10 0	2,938 15 6	2,924 10 3	2,963 9 6
Loss in addition to interest on capital ..		—	38 3 2	—	—
TOTALS		£6,300 0 5	£6,123 9 3	£5,833 2 0	£6,216 2 11

It is certain Mr. Chamberlain's proposals must do us good. Even supposing you give us no money, it must be a benefit to have somebody else paying some of our taxes. I am sufficiently patriotic to feel that if we make the country prosperous we shall get some of the advantages. If we do not, I shall be sorry; but at the same time I do not want to be a dog in the manger. If Mr. Chamberlain could only put on such a duty as would enable us to re-cultivate the 4,000,000 acres of wheat we cultivated when I began farming, the price of labour would rise from 12s. to 15s. a week. We could get the people back to the land because we should then be able to pay them sufficient wages to bring them back. If you only give us £1 a coomb for wheat, then we shall grow wheat on 4,000,000 acres.

Duties.

669

WITNESS No. 129.

MR. W. ANKER SIMMONS, F.S.I.

(Land Agent and Agricultural Valuer, Henley-on-Thames, representing the Berks. and Oxon. Chamber of Agriculture).

I have had 25 years' experience as Agent for land in 10 different counties, embracing 10,000 acres, of which from 1,000 to 3,000 acres are generally in hand. I am intimately acquainted with 3 farms:—Remenham East Berks., a mixed farm, 1,127 acres, of which 515 are highly farmed; Kirby, West Berks., sheep farm, 550, including 90 acres down and pasture, fairly farmed; Lewknor, Oxfordshire, 500 acres, chiefly arable, farmed, on strict tenant farmer's lines. Other particulars are as follows:—

Farm.	Working Horses.	Young Horses.	Cattle.	Sheep.	Pigs.	Wheat. (quarters)	Barley. (quarters)	Oats. (quarters)
Remenham ..	31 (5 mares (in foal))	12	170	944	63 (18 with sows)	322	100	1080
Kirby	12	5	none	269	28 (22 with sows)	95	35	150
Lewknor . . .	14	11	30	none	34	294	148	196

The farm of 1,127 acres is heavily stocked, consuming 1,000 quarters of home-grown corn yearly. We use the farm-yard manure for the corn and purchase artificial manure for the root crops.

We have much fewer sheep than formerly, particularly in Hampshire, a regular sheep county. Much land has gone to grass or very bad down, and the homesteads are all going to rack and ruin. Land is often farmed by owners because they prefer to keep it for sporting. As more land is put down to grass, often very poor grass, less feed is produced. The change from wheat growing to dairy farming has been gradual, increasing enormously in the last 10 years. The fall in price of English wheat has chiefly resulted in the laying down to grass of land formerly growing corn. The effect upon the productiveness of land has been most disastrous; the corn grower's stock decreased with his capital. The land deteriorated, often becoming unsuitable even for pasture. The loss has been enormous, and has had the effect of depopulating country villages. English land is gradually being devoted to the production of other kinds of food, dairy produce, potatoes, fruit, etc., which, under careful management, pay better than wheat. One of our best-paying crops is oats, which alone has held its own for the last 80 years. We grow more oats to-day than 20 years ago. Oats have not been affected by foreign competition to anything like the extent that wheat has. Oat straw is practically as valuable as wheat straw. We make within 2s. 6d. to 3s. a ton, the same price as wheat straw. A large quantity of winter oats is grown in our neighbourhood, and one of the biggest growers grows almost entirely for the straw. If sufficient capital is invested, a large farmer makes a bigger profit than the man who farms on a small scale, by being able to buy and sell to better advantage. Considerable saving is effected by purchasing foods, seeds, &c. in large quantities, and by making sale contracts for produce. Farmers have lost heavily by attempting corn-growing with insufficient capital.

State of Agriculture.

671

There is room for a large reduction of the railway rates, and the intervention of Parliament is needed, for where the railways hold a monopoly it is impossible to expect justice except under compulsion. The English farmer is under a severe handicap as compared with countries where the railways belong to the State. The man who grazes beef in South America and is able to deliver his bullocks to Smithfield at the same rate as the Scotch farmer, possesses an enormous advantage over the heavily rented and rated British farmer. The man who takes up a large tract of virgin soil in Canada practically without rent or rates, and can produce crops with the smallest cultivation and put them on the English market at a lower rate than from Liverpool to London, holds a big advantage over the wheat grower in England. The railways have met the question of the carriage of milk, but not altogether satisfactorily. The rate from Henley to London is reduced a farthing per gallon; one farmer saves £40 a year by the reduction. Even now the railways take a great deal too much. Probably the motor industry will have a great effect upon the question. Undoubtedly there is still some reduction wanted.

Railway and Shipping Rates.

672

A Board ought to be appointed to deal with the question as between the farmer and the railway companies. The intervention of the Board of Trade is too cumbersome a method, and the Railway and Canal Commission is too expensive a Court, it ought to be much simpler to get straight to the railway company.

673 Co-operation.

There has been no development in co-operative buying, market organisation, or means of carriage. A great advantage would be in a better system of co-operation as in Holland, but English Agriculture is too diversified for a uniform co-operative system. In Holland, where they have a regular co-operative system of butter making and of carriage, they get a uniform article which they put on the market to better advantage than the English farmer can.

Labour.

The rising generation of farm labourers is altogether inferior in knowledge of agricultural work. It is extremely difficult to find a young labourer who is a good shepherd or stockman, or who knows anything about building or thatching a rick, it is even difficult to procure a good plough boy. The education question is at the root of this evil. Seven-eighths of the boys educated in country schools in the South of England go from the country schools into the towns. In the Henley district we have started a small agricultural society for the encouragement of good work by young farm labourers. We hold a yearly meeting and give considerable money prizes for ploughing, rick building, thatching, hedge making, shepherding, &c., but the entries of the younger men get smaller every year. We have had no entry under 25 for shepherding, rick building or rick thatching for two years. This year we had 38 men ploughing and only 7 boys. To deal satisfactorily with the labour question the facilities must be increased for becoming proficient in expert agricultural labour, and higher wages must be paid for good workmanship. We must very much improve the position of the labourer, who is looked down upon by other workmen. Girls are proud of a mechanic or a skilled artisan but shrug their shoulders at an agricultural labourer. Boys should be apprenticed to farmers and pass a certain standard and so raise the status of the labourer. If you put the farmer in a position to pay a better wage and the landlord to provide him with a better home you would get back your agricultural labourer.

674 Wages.

The wages rate has slightly increased, particularly where the farms are near large towns. Wages in West Berkshire have risen from 10s. to 12s. per week. In East Berkshire and South Oxfordshire from 2s. 2d. to 2s. 6d. per day, for ordinary labourers; shepherds, head cowmen, rick builders, &c., averaging nearly a £1 a week.

Cottage Accommodation. Education.

There has been considerable development in the building of better cottages. Fair wages and a good cottage with a large garden would go far towards causing a return of labourers.

Facilities for higher agricultural education have increased, almost every county now possessing its agricultural college, where the practice of scientific agriculture is taught. Agricultural labourers do not come under this scheme; money prizes should be offered to labourers who prove themselves expert in shepherding, care of stock, rick building, thatching, hedge-making, the manipulation of machinery, &c.

Local Rates.

Local rates and taxes have increased from 30 to 50 % within the last 10 years. Agricultural land can ill afford the educational rate which forms a gross injustice. Education ought to be paid for out of the Imperial exchequer, not from local taxation. County, district, and parish councils have also added to local burdens. The Education rate in Berkshire is 10d. to 11d., it is increasing very much. Education is a most terrible burden, because land is paying a very unfair amount. A big town trader with premises rated at £300 a year probably gets an income of £1,500 to £3,000. A farm similarly assessed may be of comparatively small area and the farmer pays the same towards education as the successful town trader although the result will be to take away from his farm the labourer wanted there.

675 Agricultural Rates Act.

The Agricultural Rates Act has benefited the occupier, but the land must be much further relieved of charges upon it.

ANNUAL OUTGOINGS.

Farm.	Rent. Per acre.	Labour. Per acre.	Feeding Stuffs. Per acre.	Manure. Per acre.	Machinery and Repairs. Per acre.	Rates and Taxes. Per acre.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Remenham ..	1 0 0	1 8 6	1 4 0	0 1 6	0 3 0	0 3 0	4 0 0
Kirby	0 10 0	1 3 0	0 12 6	0 1 0	0 1 6	0 2 0	2 10 0
Lewknor	1 0 0	1 0 0 (including bailiff)	0 4 0 (no sheep kept)	0 1 6	0 2 0	0 4 0	2 11 6

676 Duties.

The adoption of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would give an impetus to milling, increasing the bulk and decreasing the price of feeding stuffs. Even a small duty on flour would increase wheat production in this country, but nothing short of 5s. duty would be of material advantage. The home production of flour would open up an enormous industry and be of immense advantage to owners of stock. Imported malting barley might be taxed with great advantage to agriculture; it is not only a valuable crop, but the successful cultivation of land for its production would tend to increase the number of home bred sheep. A duty on flour would be of more advantage to the British farmer than any on wheat. To make its manufacture here more profitable than its importation from America would make an enormous difference to farming in this country. A rise in flour would also raise the price of wheat. Labourers would quickly derive advantage from Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. If the milling were done in this country it would not raise the price of flour, and the opposition would be great enough to prevent a rise in the price of bread. Wheat can be grown to better advantage in our Colonies than here. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not bring about any important change in the character of home farming.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 130.

MR. JOHN SPEIR

(Farmer, Market Gardener and Dairy Farmer, Newton Farm, Newton, Glasgow).

I propose to give evidence on general arable farming, combined with dairying, market gardening, &c. I am 6 miles from Glasgow, which is my chief market. My farm is 400 acres, of which 35 acres are plantations, roads, houses, &c. I utilise 50 acres for market garden crops, such as cabbages, onions, rhubarb, table turnips, rasps, tomatoes, daffodils, &c. I also grow oats and wheat, hay, potatoes, turnips and mangolds. I have nearly 100 acres under pasture. There are usually from 90 to 100 cows kept, and from August to the New Year from 300 to 400 sheep. I buy my sheep in and send them out again after being fattened. There are generally 15 to 16 work horses.

Rents have decreased about 30 % since 1875, while most of the crops on farms such as I occupy, for a similar distance round the city, have decreased in value from 30 % to 50 %. The heaviest fall has been in some particular items of market gardening. Competition has been principally from a distance, more especially from the Mediterranean and the Scilly Isles. The cost of production has also slightly decreased. Feeding stuffs, town manure and artificial manures have all decreased considerably; otherwise rents would have fallen more. In 1876 I was paying about 8s. 6d. per ton for stable manure, delivered at my station, which I can now get at about 3s. 6d. per ton. Besides what is made on the farm I use from 2,000 to 4,000 tons per annum, so that the saving under this head is from £500 to £1,000 per year. In a lessened degree the same applies to artificial manures and feeding stuffs. Town manure is delivered to me by rail from a distance of 6 to 8 miles. The ordinary farmers living at a greater distance from the source of supply have experienced a corresponding reduction, if they were in a position to get manure at all. But 10 % of the farmers in England or Scotland are not getting manure directly from any large town. The cause of this is certainly extreme cost, but if those particular farmers who do not use it were close to a railway station they would use it. Take this instance where the cost put on rail for me is 2s. 6d. per ton. The railway rate out is 1s.; 30 years ago the cost put on rail was 7s. 6d. That is 5s. difference. In 1876 straw was worth from 60s. to 100s. per ton, and hay 100s. to 120s., while milk was about 20 % over present prices, the price coming down continually from 1878 till now. Last month the production of milk for consumption in Glasgow was considerably in excess of the demand. Dairy cows are the only stock which has not fallen in value, the prices now being much the same as in 1875. I have a contract, under special conditions, for the supply of milk to the Fever Hospital in Glasgow. The animals are compelled to undergo the tuberculin test, and certain conditions as to the delivery of the milk are insisted upon. The price is 9½d. per gallon all over the year. The ordinary price in the market, of common milk not under such special conditions, would be 8½d. to 8¾d. per imperial gallon delivered in Glasgow early in the morning. If delivered by rail the price would scarcely be 8d. The retail prices vary according to the district, season, and the people who are buying.

Farms of the class I occupy have become less remunerative principally because the costs of production have not decreased at the same ratio as the value of the finished products. Wages have somewhat increased, and so have taxes, while rent, manures, feeding stuffs, &c., have gone down considerably, the margin left being not so great as formerly.

Railway rates for milk do not affect me. I do not send by railway, but the rates are quite well known to me. Many farmers within 100 miles of Glasgow and Edinburgh are paying really more rent to the railway company for the conveyance of their product than they pay to the landlord. There is one rate of ¾d. a gallon for all distances up to 20 miles; then, between 20 miles and 100 miles, I think it is 1d. a gallon; above 100 miles, I think it goes to 1½d. or 1¾d.

We have competition in the shape of separated milk from Ireland. It comes in considerable quantities, and is a class of competition to which your attention should be directed. It is coming into Glasgow (but not all from Ireland) at present to the extent of about 6,000 gallons per day. It is impossible for me to say how much is sold, or whether any is sold, as separated milk, but what is of very great importance is the necessity of seeing that it is sold for what it really is. I have no objection at all to the sale of separated milk, but I have a great objection to it being sold for what it is not. I prevailed on the Town Council of Glasgow to put a man at each station for a week last February. The quantity of separated milk that came in during that particular week was 37,000 gallons. The inspector tested each vessel, and was absolutely sure there was no mistake. It was sent to, practically speaking, all the milk dealers in the city. The inspectors are there, but they have nothing to do with it. It is quite a legitimate trade. In London the inspectors insist on having so much fat in milk—not in separated milk—and probably the separated milk is used to tone down the ordinary milk to as near the 3 or 3·2 % required by the Act, as they possibly can. In Glasgow they are at liberty to bring in as much separated milk as they think fit. The probability is that milk sent into Glasgow as natural milk has a composition of 4 % of fat or more at this period of the year, and these dealers, by the addition of one gallon of separated milk to 4, would still have it up to the Government standard of 3 % as far as the fat is concerned. The other solids would equally be above the standard, and the consequence is that as long as separated milk is undetected when added to new milk, it forms a means of adulteration which cannot be detected by any system of analysis yet discovered. There is certainly fraud. Within the last year one owner was prosecuted in connection with 6 samples of milk (3 of which contained almost as much as 5 % of fat, and the others were slightly less) but with less other solids than are required by the Government standard. When a farmer adulterates milk as a rule he puts in water. The water reduces the other solids of the milk. This man had no doubt very rich milk, and he had added a small quantity of water, which made some slight reduction in the solids other than fats, and yet he had as much fat on an average in his milk as was in an ordinary gallon and a half. All the same he had adulterated his milk, and was prosecuted for it, and fined very heavily, somewhere about £20. There should be 11½ % of total solids, of which 3 % shall be fats—that is the Government standard. And, although the 3 % or 3·25, whichever it might be, of fats were present, because the other solids—sugar and casein and so on—had fallen below the 11½ %, the man was fined.

State of
Agriculture.

678

Profits.

679

Railway Rates.

Separated Milk.

680

681 Separated Milk
—continued

If he added the separated milk his total solids would be above 11½%. They will be higher than the requirements. And he takes good care to tone down the fats sent out to the lower standard as near as possible. It is both a moral and legal fraud. My contention is that the Government should take steps to treat separated milk so that it can be followed, no matter whether or not it is used for adulteration purposes, by putting or compelling makers of separated milk to put in something which will not be deleterious to health so that it shall show itself when added to the other milk. You have a precedent in the case of methylated spirit which is treated in exactly the same way, so that it cannot be used for illegitimate purposes.

Comparative statement of the cost of production and value of a rotation of crops (less labour) in 1876 and 1904, on 4 acres of land:—

		COST OF PRODUCTION.												
		1876.						1904.						
Cost of Production.														
	Dung—25 tons at 8s. 6d.	..	..	£10	12	6		Dung—25 tons at 3s. 6d.	..	..	£4	7	6	
	Artificials, say—							Artificials, say—						
	2 cwt. supers at 80s.	..	..	0	8	0		2 cwt. supers at 2s. 3d.	..	..	0	4	6	
	2 cwt. Kainit at 60s.	..	..	0	6	0		2 cwt. Kainit at 1s. 9d.	..	..	0	3	6	
	1 cwt. Nitrate ..	..	..	0	15	0		1 cwt. Nitrate at 200s.	..	..	0	10	0	
	Rent, 4 acres at 70s.	..	..	14	0	0		Rent, 4 acres at 42s. 6d.	..	..	8	10	0	
	Taxes, do. at 2s.	..	..	0	8	0		Taxes, do. at 2s. 6d.	..	..	0	10	0	
						£26	9	6				£14	5	6

682

		VALUE OF THE PRODUCE.										
		1876.				1904.						
Value of Produce.												
Oats, 50 bushels at 3s. 4d.	..	..	£8	6	10	Oats, 56 bushels at 2s. 3d.	..	..	£6	6	0	
35 cwt. Straw at 60s.	..	..	5	5	0	35 cwt. Straw at 37s. 6d.	..	..	3	5	7	
6 tons Potatoes at 80s.	..	..	24	0	0	6 tons Potatoes at 50s.	..	..	15	0	0	
Wheat, 36 bushels at 5s.	..	..	9	0	0	Wheat, 36 bushels at 3s. 4d.	..	..	6	0	0	
40 cwt. Straw at 70s.	..	..	7	0	0	40 cwt. Straw at 40s.	..	..	4	0	0	
Hay, 2 tons at 110s.	..	..	11	0	0	Hay, 2 tons at 60s.	..	..	6	0	0	
					£64	11	10			£40	11	7
Less manure, rent and taxes	..	..	26	9	6	Less manure, rent and taxes	..	..	14	5	6	
					£38	5	4			26	6	1
						Difference for labour and profit	..	..	11	19	3	
										£38	5	4

683

Labour and
Wages.

Labour of all kinds has gradually become scarcer and dearer. All over Scotland the wages of agricultural labour are regulated by the demand for labour outside of farming, and not by farming. In manufacturing, if a maker cannot get a sale for his goods at a price to leave him a profit, he stops producing, or reduces wages until the one balances the other. In agriculture that cannot be done. The bulk of the expense of producing a crop may be incurred one or more years before the crop is sold, and all crops and manures being perishable, and all land naturally inclined to produce weeds, any curtailment in labour, when crops are at an unremunerative price, in the long run, often increases the expenses of cultivation instead of decreasing them. While the farmer's wages bill admits of a little fluctuation in casual labour, there is little alteration in temporary slack times. While his gross wages are never so great as those of the manufacturer, still in times of good trade he must increase his to a somewhat corresponding degree to that of the manufacturer, whether he gets any profit or not, otherwise the best men gradually drift away. A married man receives on my farm, which is typical of conditions within a radius of 30 miles, from 21s. to 22s. 6d. a week and a free house. There is no piece-work. They have a uniform wage. In Scotland, in 99 cases out of 100, houses are given free. Occasionally the labourer has potato land. In my case, I am in the habit of sowing wheat after potatoes, and when the land is being ploughed I supply each man with a girl, and he gets his share of all the potatoes which the woman gathers. All men may not be ploughing, and the potatoes are brought in, and then distributed amongst all the men who have houses. They have as many potatoes as would serve them for seven or eight months in the year. They get in addition their coals carted free, and they usually get coal at my contract price for the supply of the farm. They are all supplied with milk, which is supposed to be supplied about cost of production. The houses are entered in the Valuation Roll at £5 a year—that is 2s. a week. That would make the wages 24s. 6d., and the other little things would increase it to 25s. or 25s. 6d. at the outside. My men have been engaged for the last 20 years on a month's notice on either side; but as a rule I only change my servants, unless they go away suddenly, at the recognised terms, that is, each half-year, or the 28th May and the 28th November. My men's houses usually have three apartments, with generally a garden, and a house outside, which is used for washing, &c. Such a convenience in Glasgow would cost at least £15 a year for rent. So that wages and other advantages come very near to 30s. With the difference in the coal and house, the labourer would be equal to a carter in Glasgow getting 30s. The milking and the light work in the fields is all done by women. They have a sort of standard wage of 1s. 6d. a day, and special rates for special work. That is the minimum. My women are mostly unmarried girls from 16 to 30, and when the brothers and fathers are earning plenty of money many do not care to work at all. The milkers are paid so much a week for milking a certain number of animals. They get 4s. 6d. a week for about 1 to 1½ hour's work morning and evening. They do not work the rest of the day. The milkers, outside of those that are permanently engaged about the farm buildings, are the men's wives, who come in the morning and evening and do the milking, and go back home again.

684

Employment of
Women.

The change in the condition of agriculture in my district is due principally to the fall in prices that began in 1877 to 1878, and the cheap transit by ocean steamers, and on foreign railways. There is one matter which has reference more especially to grain growing, viz., the introduction of binders. Had the binders never been introduced into America I do not suppose there would have been much alteration in prices even yet, because it would have been simply impossible to have provided labour to harvest the crops in the way that is done now. There are other considerations, such as climate, that are of more importance even than the labour. I am familiar with the conditions in the United States and in Canada and in Hungary, and while we grow very much larger crops than they do, they certainly reap it at a cost that we are not able to approach. It is no use attempting it, because the climatic conditions will not permit of it.

The British farmer generally, or the Scotch farmer and wheat grower, is very severely handicapped by the heavy railway rates he has to pay for the carriage of his produce to market. Wheat in Winnipeg is equal in value per bushel to that produced in Scotland, and could be carried from Winnipeg to Glasgow at a very few cents per bushel, whereas from Aberdeen to Glasgow it would take 10 per cent. of the full cost. In other words, it can be conveyed from Winnipeg to Glasgow cheaper than from Aberdeen.

A large proportion of stock of all kinds is now sold by auction, while fairs and private selling in markets are gradually on the decrease. I think the change has slightly cheapened cost of production. I consider the method of selling by auction preferable to the old-fashioned method of dealing with dealers in nearly every case, and especially in connection with live stock. There is only one man out of a considerable number who is a really first-class judge of the value of live stock. The auctioneer as a rule is a better judge than the average farmer. The consequence was that previously many a man who did not know the value of live stock asked a price which clearly indicated to the buyers that he did not know, which information they would use afterwards, and in the end would usually buy cheaper than they would otherwise have done.

Little has been done in co-operative buying and selling. Associations for the buying of manures particularly are now fewer than 15 years ago. Agricultural progress and education have made continuous and steady progress for 25 years.

It is very questionable if cottage building has done more than replace those which have become uninhabitable through decay. In former times, when there were more crofts and small farms than now, there were houses attached to these, and when they became merged into the neighbouring farms the houses were used as cottages as long as possible. These are, however, gradually disappearing through decay, and in many places are not replaced. In Scotland few farm labourers reside in the villages, and as few cottages are empty in rural districts, and the rural population is continually decreasing, there must be fewer cottages than 30 years ago. There is urgent need all over the country for more cottage accommodation of such a class as may help to induce the better class workmen to remain. Some estates are doing good work in that direction, but on others very little is done.

I am well acquainted with Canada and a good many of the Northern States of America, and several times have been in nearly all the countries north of the Danube and the Alps, and none of the countries in that area has any material advantage over ourselves in methods of cultivation. Most countries have a much more steady climate than Scotland, and this admits of several machines being used to greater advantage than here; but this very steadiness of climate, when in the extreme, as in drought, continued frost in spring or early autumn, often leads to as great loss as our excess of wet. The dryness of most countries in summer, compared with Scotland, somewhat tends to decrease the yield, but the frost which is common in most countries in winter conserves the manurial ingredients to a much greater extent than in our open, wet winters. During these times the manurial ingredients washed into the drain and subsoil are enormous, consequently manuring in Scotland is generally heavier than elsewhere. The drier weather makes fallowing easier and more satisfactory; it permits of the header and binder being used more than here; grain can be stored in bulk owing to its dryness, while here such cannot be done, and the cost is therefore greater; hay crops may be cut in the morning and stacked in the evening or next day, thus evading the risks and losses prevalent here through damage by rain and costs of handling. In the United States and Canada green maize takes the place of roots with us, and at much less cost, while in most of central and south Europe beet pulp is used for the same purpose. Beet pulp compares more nearly with grains than any other substance in its effect on the animals and in its feeding value. The sugar being in great part extracted the most valuable materials left are the albumenoids, and these being more concentrated than they previously were, it makes the food, weight for weight, a comparatively speaking valuable one; and it also has the tendency, when it is used for milk production, such as our own roots or grains, to keep up the flow of milk. In many of the countries that do not go in very largely for milk production they fatten bullocks with it by the hundred. I know—more especially with reference to Hungary and Germany, where I have examined a large number of factories—those which can utilise milk cows have done so, but the largest number fatten bullocks, usually 6 or 7 or 8 to 10 year old draught bullocks.

I think beet for sugar is a very profitable crop. I have hesitation in saying it can be made a profitable crop in this country, because it has already been tried in two or three instances, and I understand it has not been found profitable. There is no doubt that we can grow beet and produce per acre as much sugar as can be done in probably any other country, and what we want now is a factory, and you will very soon get plenty of beet at a moderate price. I agree that the previous examples were hardly fair to the English growers, because then the bounty was in existence and they had to compete with the bounty-fed article in continental countries. The conditions certainly are different now, but whether the conditions are even sufficient to compete with our more costly labour one cannot answer right off. Farmers will readily come forward to grow the beet for factories if they were established, if the price which could be offered per ton was profitable. I think we could produce at about £1 per ton for raw beet in many districts—not in every district, but in at least one-third of the best arable land in any of the three countries. This would not be in every district where you might grow mangolds, but nearly so. Beet as preparatory for the next cereal crop is equal to mangolds, turnips or potatoes.

My annual outlay per acre, on an average of several years, is as follows:—Rent, 42s. 6d.; labour, 96s.; feeding stuffs, 36s. 6d.; manure, 28s.; machinery, 13s. 6d.; rates and taxes, 2s. 6d.; insurance, coal, travelling expenses, &c., 7s. 6d.

Causes of
Change.

685

Railway Rates.

Auction Sales.

686

Cottage
Accommodation.Methods of
Cultivation.

687

Beet
Cultivation.

688

Annual
Outgoings.

689 Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will help to provide more and steadier employment for the town labourer ; but any increase in steadiness will increase the drain on the rural population, as it is only in times of trade depression that the flow of labour is lessened or stayed from the country to the town. In periods of brisk trade the drain is continuous and severe. Briskness in trade seldom means increased profits in farming. Food I do not anticipate will be altered much, if anything, in price, while rural labour and machinery may be increased in cost. Milling would be increased, which would give more labour, not only in the milling, but in the providing of mills and milling machinery. Mills would most likely be principally erected at or near the ports. They would have no effect on railways other than in the distribution of an extra supply of mill offals, which might have a less value than at present. The advantages accruing from briskness of trade in the towns with a free market go largely to the foreign producer and provider of food stuffs. With a protected market we would reap the advantage. The rural labourer would obtain little if any direct advantage from the proposals. If no more work is going to be provided he will not in any way be better. If prices are increased as far as farmers are concerned they will certainly require more work, and the labourer will be benefited. The proposals that have yet been made will not increase work on farms in any way, nor be of any benefit to the labourers. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will not increase the selling price of wheat which we, as farmers, have to sell.

Bounties.

I have not given the question of a bounty any consideration. Unless you can in some way increase, practically speaking, the value of our crops, I see no hope of the present proposals in any way benefiting the ordinary farmer.

690

Preference.

I am of opinion that the Colonies just now get a considerable preference, and the large towns in much the same way. They are getting, without any cost, all our young men, whom we have reared and educated. They are getting them at wholesale prices. Then, if any of them turn out wasters, or in any way become dependent on the country for support, they come back upon the rural districts to be kept. To both the Colonies and the large towns that is a preference of very great importance, and it is a very great hardship on the rural districts.

WITNESS No. 131.

MR. C. B. STIBY

(Farmer, Bradford-Peverell, Dorchester, representing the Winfrith Farmers' Club).

I farm 600 acres within 3 miles of the town of Dorchester. It is a mixed dairy, sheep and corn farm.

State of
Agriculture.

Agriculture is not in a very flourishing condition. During the last 10 or 12 years the depression has been due to the reduction in the price of corn. Dairying is about the same now as it was 10 or 15 years ago. Sheep farming fluctuates, but is regulated very much by the quantity of keep which is produced during the year. I do not breed cows, but buy every year. I am letting 40 cows to a dairyman. Corn growing has suffered very considerably, because of the reduction in price. That applies to all kinds of grain, but not so much to oats, though oats have much depreciated this year. I grow a very large proportion of oats, and I have reduced the growth of wheat something like 75 %. Barley I have reduced quite 30 %, because I have found that oats, taking the advantage of the straw and everything else, is a more profitable crop than either of the others. What I continue to grow of wheat is grown entirely for the straw. I would not grow a handful of wheat but for that.

691

Causes of Change.

The change in the condition of agriculture is due to the fall in the price of corn. The price is such that it has caused a great many of the poorer class of farms to be sown down to permanent pasture. This change is made only for the purpose of saving the cost of labour. It began from 12 or 14 years ago, and is increasing year by year. I have laid down myself about 50 acres permanent pasture. The result of the change is that the number of sheep in Dorsetshire is decreasing. In my case I spend £500 a year on artificial food, and by that means I have not lowered my stock ; but where you do not supply artificial food to a large extent your stock is reduced. On land that is put down to grass you can keep fewer head of stock.

Profits.

Profits have generally diminished in recent years. This year the actual working of the farm has yielded me 5 % interest on the capital invested. That is small compared with 20 years ago ; but it has not been any better for the last 10 years. I consider this rather a favourable year. The profit is not allowing anything towards the cost of management, or for the value of my time, or depreciation.

692

Wages.

The rate of wages of labourers has changed very little for the last 12 or 14 years. I am not paying any more, except to the piece men—men whom we engage for a month or six weeks in the summer. Their wages are certainly somewhat higher.

Cottage
Accommodation.

We are very badly off for cottage accommodation. What we have is not good, and I attribute a great deal of the labour difficulties to that very fact. Some of the cottages that are occupied only just escape the sanitary laws. They are too crowded ; there are not sufficient rooms. Very many cottages in my district have only 2 bedrooms, they are very old thatched buildings, and they lack the accommodation the labourer ought to have. If you have a good house with good accommodation you can always get a much more respectable family. Steps should be taken to improve that state of things. Many landlords will not pull the cottages down until they get into a state of decay, and they are compelled to. Very different cottages are then built.

Rents.

Landlords have suffered severely from the depression of late years. Rents have fallen very considerably, in many cases by one-half during the past 15 years, and that may be the reason why so little is being done.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

Landlords have not taken advantage of the Agricultural Rates Act. The gain is entirely to the farmer and the landlords throughout the county have been considerate.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates have not altered in any way. The little alteration you could expect from the Railway Companies would not be sufficient to make farming very much better ; of course, every little is a help.

Local rates are increasing very considerably. In the year 1888 the Lady Day Union Rate was 5½d. in the £. The County Rate was 2½d. in the £. At Michaelmas, 1888, the Poor Rate was 6½d. in the £, and the County Rate was 2½d. in the £. That makes 1s. 5d. in the £ for the year 1888. Then the Lady Day Poor Rate for 1903 was 7d. in the £, and the County Rate was 4½d. in the £. The Michaelmas Poor Rate was 6½d. in the £, and the County Rate was 4½d., and the Education Rate for the year is 5½d. in addition, so that would be 1s. 1½d. for the Poor Rate, 9d. for the County Rate, and 5½d. for the Education Rate. So that in the year 1888 the Poor Rate and County Rate came to 1s. 5d., and at the present time it is 2s. 4d. From the appointment of the County Councils our rates have nearly doubled. They have gone up from £12,000 to £23,000 a year. This is due to the great increase of the expenditure upon the roads; but our roads are much better since we adopted steam rolling.

The rent of my farm is £1 an acre; labour costs 19s. 3d., and foodstuffs 18s. 8d. Machinery repairs cost from £40 to £50 a year, and the rates are 1s. 6d. an acre, not including Income Tax.

I am absolutely in favour, personally, of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme from beginning to end. I do not believe there is any direct advantage to the farmer; but I believe if you can increase the circulation of money through the country, and make the country more prosperous, we, as agriculturists, are bound to share in that prosperity. According to past experience, a 2s. duty on wheat would do us no good, because the wheat went down when we had the 1s. duty. I do not anticipate much from that. If we could get back to the old Malt Tax, and get a duty of 6s. or 7s. a quarter on barley, or on all barley, maize, or other corn used for distilling or brewing purposes in lieu of our present system of collecting it by a Beer Tax, it would be a very great boon to the agriculturist. It was our own fault having that tax taken off. We have all seen the error of our ways, and would like to go back to the old principle, if possible. There is nothing that would restore the growing of corn throughout the country more than that one system would do. Malting barley will scarcely pay to grow under 32s. to 34s. a quarter. There are not many years when we can get that. The second-class barleys never go to the mash tub, and unless you are growing something of very superior quality they are simply reduced to feeding value. The duty on flour should be higher than the duty on corn. If we could have a duty on flour it would very greatly affect the agriculturists. It would again start a great many of the small mills that are now shut up. On a little stream I know 4 mills are closed that formerly did not only a good trade, but used the wheat of the district; whereas now we have to send it 10, 12, or 14 miles. Then it would give us the offals, the bran and the pollards, which are now not only kept back from us, but possibly are sold to us again in the form of cakes. If you could put a duty on flour, I would rather let wheat come in absolutely free. If the price of cake was reduced 10% or 15%, that would be a material gain. I spend nearly £500 in cake, and 10% on that would be worth something. My instructions from the Club are that I am to advocate a duty on meat of every description, both pork as well as beef and mutton. That includes bacon. On an ordinary mixed farm of 600 acres, on which a man produces and kills his own beasts and sells them, a tax of 10% on meat would make very little difference. It would make the meat, on the other hand, so much dearer for the people—and when I speak of the people I mean the artisans and the labourers—and the increase in the cost of labour on account of the increased price of meat would be more than the value of that increase to the farmer. That is my own personal view, but the Club say, "Let us have a duty on all imported stock." My club are nearly unanimous in saying that there ought to be a duty on eggs and all dairy produce. There is a large quantity of milk imported in the form of condensed milk, and it would be an advantage to put a duty on that. Duties on cheese and butter would help the dairy farmer, but I cannot see myself that the small duty which could be put on dairy produce would be of any great value. If you could put on such a duty as to stop importation on a large scale it would be an advantage.

WITNESS No. 132.

MR. JOSEPH SUGGITT

(Farmer, Sheriff Hutton, York, President of and representing the Yorkshire Union of Agricultural Clubs and Chambers of Agriculture, comprising 21 representative bodies of farmers).

I farm 2 small mixed farms 367 acres, 100 grass, the rest arable, at Sheriff Hutton, 10 miles north of York.

The general condition of all agriculture in my district is very low. Most of my 100 acres is fair feeding land, but cattle do not do so well as formerly. I cannot fat them readily without cake. Grass and tillage land has deteriorated through wet seasons in the 70's. Tillage land requires more cultivation than formerly. Although we do the land as well as ever, it produces less. I have rented 1 farm (200 acres—grass land and tillage) 35 years. The other (a sheep and barley farm, 160 acres light land) I bought 12 years ago. On the tillage land we grow much barley, and oats, and a little wheat. Profits have almost disappeared, we have just been able to live. Climatic conditions and fearfully low prices are the cause. Rent has been very little lowered, and there is always someone ready to take the farm at the same rent.

We have generally as much good labour as we want, but we ought to have permission to use child-labour at certain seasons of the year.

The rate of married men's wages has increased less than 10% during the last 5 or 6 years.

Co-operative buying and selling has not developed at present, but the local butchers are combining, and we must do the same in self-defence. The York Corporation put up weighing-machines in the meat markets and the butchers protested by refusing to buy cattle by live weight by auction, as they buy better by guess—to the loss of the farmer. The body of which I am president resisted this, and the butchers had to give way.

Local Rates.

693

Outgoings.

Duties.

694

Effect on Corn Growing.

Effect on Milling.

Effect on Meat.

695

Effect on Dairying.

State of Agriculture.

696

Labour.

Wages Co-operation.

697 Education.

Our servants are not so good as formerly. The best servants were those that could not read or write. I do not want to go back to that, but education should be more adapted to the requirements of farming.

Cottage
Accommodation.

On the larger farms they have sufficient cottage accommodation.

Canadian Methods.

In Manitoba (Canada) they are able to farm much more land at the same expense than in England, no man ever has 2 horses in a team—it is either 3 or 4, under 1 man, and they also save labour by their methods of cultivation. In harvest they use sheaf-carrying implements which throw a heap of sheaves together so that 1 man can stook after a reaper, saving much labour. The land does not take so much working and preparing for seed as ours.

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes have very much increased, and are still increasing, particularly through the Education Act. District Councils have also added to rates, which have increased 100 % in the last 5 years. We have better roads than before, but the Education Act mulets the farmer for something which does positive harm.

Agricultural Rates
Act.

We get sensible relief from the Agricultural Rates Act, which I would like renewed, farmers feel this very strongly. We did not get the full advantage. During bad times I got 10 % rent returned before, but nothing after the Act came in.

698 Annual Outgoings.

Rent £1 an acre, labour £2, feeding stuffs 10s., manures 10s., machinery, &c., 10s. (including wear and tear), rates and taxes 3s. 6d.

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will not be of much advantage to us directly. When foreign corn was taxed 1s. per quarter prices were not raised. I anticipate no direct advantage to the farmer from the duty on flour and I am doubtful if the miller will benefit, or offals become cheaper. If anyone gets an advantage it will be the labouring and artisan classes. It would be an advantage to the farmer if we could have beer brewed from malt and hops. I am in favour of the Pure Beer Bill, because it would create a larger demand for barley, and probably increase the price.

WITNESS No. 133.

MR. HERBERT TALLENT

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Westacre, near Swaffham, Norfolk).

699

I propose to give evidence on corn growing, sheep breeding and bullock and sheep grazing.

I farm about 4,800 acres, of which about 3,400 acres is arable. This I farm on a five course system. I usually grow about 1,700 acres of corn, and there is about 400 acres of what you may term waste land. I have all descriptions of land on my farm.

State of
Agriculture.

The general condition of agriculture is decidedly unsatisfactory. Sheep breeding and grazing pays best. That undoubtedly is the main stay of light land or of Norfolk farming. This is primarily due to the fact that frozen and chilled mutton are not looked upon with great favour, and that there is a fair demand for all English-grazed, best mutton. Then in addition you may take the shortage of sheep in the country, which undoubtedly has something to do with it. In our county, and in the district I am acquainted with in Suffolk, sheep have much decreased during the past 10 years through various circumstances. That has tended to keep up the price. Wool has been a very serious question for the last 10 or 15 years. This year of course, there is a slight rise to those who have held it, but a great many have not held it. The 1,700 acres on which I grow corn has not been profitable for the last 2 years. I grow about 300 acres of wheat (I ought to grow 600 or 700), about 1,000 acres of barley, and then oats and a certain amount of contract peas for seed growers. Oats decidedly pays best, and wheat pays the least. Practically it is on account of the straw that we grow the wheat. Profits have been considerably reduced, and rents are materially reduced also. I have held my occupation for 24 years, my Gayton Farm for 14 years. The rent of the farm where I live has been reduced about 50%. The rent of certain portions at Gayton has been reduced practically 70%, but it was over-rented before. Taking all things into consideration my returns are not at all adequate. The reduction of rent by 50% is as great as the reduction in the price of wheat. The reason why there is no profit seems to be the enormous expenditure on labour. I do not call mine an enormous expenditure on labour. I should like to spend on it about £500 a year more. Cost of labour on the arable land is 25s. an acre, and on the grass land 5s. That may appear enormous considering the low price and present profit, but you have either to do it or throw it up. Labour is the only thing you cannot do without while you can get it. In olden times labour would be at a much lower price in proportion to the price of corn than it is now. We have had no particular difficulty with reference to labour. We are short, and undoubtedly will be short, unless some means can be devised by which we can pay higher wages to keep the young fellows on the land. Twenty-four years ago there were a lot of strong young fellows on the farm, about the same age as myself, but they have grown older, and they are there still, or many of them. When they are done I do not know where I shall go to replace them. One man lived with me all my life till last Michaelmas. He was 77. The quality of that labour is good, they know their work and know how to do it. I do not say they take as much interest or do so much as they did 20 years ago (they have learned a little lesson perhaps), but they are better than what I shall get in the future. It is not the fowness of wages alone that makes the young men wish to go, there are other circumstances, the attractions of the town, &c. At the same time you cannot start a young fellow on his 14s. or 15s. a week which possibly would hold him. The quality of the labour of the young men is not so good as formerly. They do not take the same interest in agricultural work, and the education at the present

700

Labour.

day has a tendency to wean them from the land. We have had to adapt ourselves to the shortage of labour during the last few years, and undoubtedly there is not the same amount of labour employed that there used to be.

The ordinary agricultural labourer with us makes a nominal wage of 12s. a week; but on an average it amounts to 15s. or 16s. The skilled labourer will average from 1s. to 2s. a week more. My shepherds earn up to 22s., and the horsemen, &c., earn about 18s. The statement made in the recent blue book that 13s. is the average rate of labourers' earnings could only have been written by someone not acquainted with agriculture.

I attribute the change in the condition of agriculture to the fall in prices of the whole of the agricultural produce. I left school when 15 to manage a farm, or to help, and the first wool that I sold I made 69s. 6d. a tod. It was up to 72s. that year. Two years ago the same quality of wool was 14s. and the secondary class of wool 12s. The same wool to-day is worth 28s.

The Great Eastern is not a very bad line for us. They have advanced their rates on certain commodities, but I am close to a seaport. We can get water carriage, and that perhaps has a certain effect.

I do not think there has been any development of the system of co-operative buying and selling. It is not absolutely necessary. I do not see where I can get any one to buy for me better than I can buy myself.

I am fairly well supplied with cottages. There is no complaint on that ground, except that we cannot get the men to live in the isolated cottages where we want them to live, and where we had no difficulty years ago.

The system of education in our schools is not agricultural at all. It is to fit the children for town life. Country education and town education ought to be on different lines. The country child ought to be given an interest in country work, and ought to be allowed at certain times of the year, beyond the ordinary school holidays, to work on the farm. There are many things that a boy of 11 or 12 years of age can do as well as a man, and that creates an interest in the farm, which he does not get if he is kept at the school till he is 14. Take the hay time, and carting the hay. We want children to lead the horses, but you must not have them. When you have 16 or 18 men pitching hay, at the end of the day they will not have done so much as they otherwise would, because they have had to lead their own horses. The boys themselves have a great interest in farming work, and whenever they have a chance, they come and earn their 6d. a day at a little light work all the year round; in the holiday time they are very anxious to come, and they would be very valuable to us if we could have them. If the schools could be closed from June 1st to Oct. 1st we could find work for every boy able to go on to the land. When he leaves school at 14 he does not want to work at the farm. He has ideas above agricultural labour. The new Education Act has increased the rates, and will do so still more, but, though I have to pay for the education of the children of the agricultural labourers, it is a decided disadvantage to me as an agriculturist. The system is all wrong. You could easily devise a scheme of what might be termed agricultural education, and do away with part of the education that is given now. It seems ridiculous, for instance, that the children in an agricultural district should be taught drawing. It is absolutely unnecessary. If boys or girls who have passed the 6th Standard show any tendency of that kind, there is no reason why there should not be schools to develop that talent, but for the ordinary agricultural labourer that is not wanted.

The soil of Norfolk as a whole does not allow of dairying being carried on successfully, but there are certain portions where you can dairy as well as you can in other places. There is butter made, of course; most farmers keep a few cows. I do not keep any except for the use of the flocks. There is not much to be done in the way of improved dairy education.

Local Rates and Taxes are undoubtedly increasing automatically almost every year, though not considerably. We got material relief from the Agricultural Rates Act, or the rates would be now almost insupportable. The landlords made no difference after the passing of that Act. About 4 years ago, when wheat went up to 38s., some landlords hinted that they should advance the rents, not altogether on account of the Rates Act; but I have not heard of any landlord taking advantage of it in any way.

My rent is £2,381 or £2,400; labour, £4,400; feeding stuffs, roughly, £4,300; manure about £1,000; and rates, £225. Most farms have fitted themselves with the machinery of to-day, and so our outlay on that for the future will not be much, except for wear and tear. My expenditure for the last year in new machinery has been £150 to £200 for binders and elevators. There are always some new machines required. My annual outgoings are £12,306. The tithe is about £40, and there are other outgoings, which mount up considerably. This amount of tithe is only on my own property. The tithe on hired land is paid by the landlord.

I believe the proposed duties would be beneficial not alone to agriculture, but to many industries. A duty on corn might not have an immediate effect on agriculture, but it must ultimately have an effect. I should like to see a considerable duty on flour, and a moderate duty on foreign, not Colonial, corn. Out of the duties levied, sufficient should be taken to give a bounty on wheat per acre grown, so that the farmers of the lighter lands might be induced also to plant wheat. At the present rate of our expenses, it would pay to grow wheat if you can make from 36s. to 40s. a quarter. At 36s. wheat just pays; it is only grown under that price for accommodation purposes. Wheat is worth 32s. to 33s. at present.* It has been on that level more or less since Mr. Ritchie took off the duty. At 40s. a quarter there would be a large increase in the quantity of wheat grown, not alone for the increase of price, but because it is a crop that is easily grown, harvested and marketed. Barley is a critical crop, it is so dependent on the climate. But you can cart wheat anyhow, if you let it stand in stack till a certain time in the spring, and you have always something to go on with in your work. If I were certain that next year wheat would sell at 36s., I should plant 200 or 300 acres more. I should not be surprised if the quantity were doubled should the price be raised to 40s.

* The price dropped in 1906 to 27s. per quarter.

Wages.

Causes of Change.

Railway Rates.

Co-operation.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Education.

Dairying.

Local Rates.
Agricultural Rates
Act.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

Bounties.

MR. JOSEPH PARKER TOONE

(Farmer and Breeder, High Cross, Rugby).

I farm 300 acres arable, 320 pasture. Being a mixed occupation, stock raising and feeding, breeding of Shires, &c., is my chief business.

State of
Agriculture.

Cereals cannot be grown at a profit, but are necessary on a stock-raising occupation to carry through winter months for rotation with roots, &c. Oats and barley have declined, wheat is somewhat better, but still unremunerative. Profits have diminished in every department except sheep-raising, which is the best on suitable soils. Foreign competition has been the chief cause of the decline of agriculture, and the change has been going on for the past 20 years. The land is not so well cultivated as it used to be; agriculturists are generally not able to pay the rate of wages demanded; and excessive railway rates for home produce are a further hindrance. Foreign methods, and especially Colonial, are much simpler than ours; no science is needed to till a virgin soil.

Labour and
Wages.

The quality is very deficient, and the supply various, where occupiers do not keep a regular staff. The rate of wages in the district has not changed in recent years. There has not lately been any extension of cottage building, and but very little change in agricultural education.

Co-operation.

Co-operative buying has been tried, but was not generally taken up, owing to scarcity of ready money. Periodical auction sales all over the district have completely changed the system of marketing stock. There has been no improvement in the means of carriage, either by rail or canal.

Local Rates.

We have benefited for a time by the operation of the Agricultural Rates Act, but the benefit has disappeared owing to the increase of the county rates (chiefly for educational expenses).

Annual Outgoings.

In 1903 were as follows:—Rent, £748; labour, £747; feeding stuffs and manure, £566; machinery, implements, &c., £175; rates and taxes, £99.

Duties.

Will be of no benefit beyond the amount proposed to be put on. The labourer will probably obtain no direct advantage, but indirectly from the stimulation of trade. Any changes that these duties might lead to in methods of cultivation are already in progress.

MR. THOS. W. WEBBER, J.P., D.L.

(Farmer, Kellyville, Athy).

I farm over 600 acres mixed tillage and grass on the Irish system.

State of
Agriculture.

Profits have diminished, prices of produce are lower and wages have gone up. The area of tillage is diminished, cereal crops reduced one-half and less remunerative. Barley and oats in 1875 fetched respectively 22s. and 15s. per barrel, now 14s. and 9s. Beef has fallen from 80s. per cwt. to 50s. These changes are entirely due to the flooding of British markets with foreign wheat, barley and other grain; also foreign beef and mutton imported frozen or alive for slaughter at ports of landing, whereby foreign growers, who pay often no rent for their land, and certainly no taxes to our exchequer, compete with Irish farmers who are forced to pay rent, besides county rates, poor rates and income tax, amounting to very nearly the entire cost of production. The time when the change occurred corresponds with the opening out of vast areas of wheat lands in America, and of cattle and beef production abroad and importation to this country, commencing about 1875. The reduction of Ireland's population by emigration to English towns and to America is from 8 millions to 4½ millions—all driven out by England's free trade policy, and many are gone to a country of plenty, high wages and protection. Cheap railway and ocean freights have helped to depopulate the old country and are the indirect result of free importation.

Labour and
Wages.

Labour is very difficult to obtain, all the able-bodied young men are gone to America, only old men and children remain. Wages have gone up all round, as these figures show: Foreman, including perquisites (15s.), 20s.; ploughman (10s.), 15s.; herd (12s.), 17s.; farm hand (7s.), 10s.; farm carpenter (18s.), 28s. The figures within brackets indicate wages in 1870, the others in 1904.

Local Rates.

Since the reduction of farm profits in Ireland, also the reduction of rents by which all the loss has not fallen on the farmers, taxation has gone, not down as it should, but up considerably. Local rates for county government roads, technical instruction, labourers' cottage loans and poor rates have increased steadily in the last 10 years.

Annual Outgoings.

In 1903 were: rent, £320; seeds, feeding stuffs and manure, £212; labour, £274; machinery, £22; rates and taxes, £54.

Housing,
Education, &c.

Ireland has made great efforts to organise, market and railroad freights have been reduced fairly. Co-operative societies abound. We are educated through the county rates and national grants gratis, and the land is well supplied with agricultural professors and instructors, and there are plenty of labourers' cottages let to the poor at 1s. per week, though built by the ratepayers at £120 cost. These are only fads and can have no earthly effect on foreign competition or enable the farmer to farm at a profit while prices of produce go steadily down.

In France foreign wheat is taxed 11s. per qr., with the result that every acre is tilled by labour up to the edge of the roads. The population is kept at home and fully employed in growing nutritious food and vegetables, also in forest work, which is readily paid for out of forest produce, also protected. The whole country is a garden growing fruit as well as bread and meat enough for all. In this country the land which used to be tilled is now gone back to prairie. Grass land produces about one-third as much produce and money value as tillage and keeps only half as much stock and employs a quarter the number of labourers.

Duties.
Example of
France.

A preferential duty of 10 % on all food imports including meat would enable farmers to grow more wheat, barley and oats, and feed more cattle and employ more labour. Ireland is noted as a good barley country, and farmers complain that even when, as last two years, the crops were good and prices opened at 15s. per barrel of 16 stone, they could live; but foreign barley came in, and in a short time prices fell to 12s., which means ruin, and that the land must go unemployed. Similarly the farmers who used to fatten cattle on grass or turnips were very hard hit in the spring when Argentine beef came in and stall-fed oxen had to be sold in Dublin market—fat for 28s. per cwt. (live weight), which means little more than store price, leaving the entire cost of oil cake and turnip a dead loss. This happened last April and will happen again, only worse. It means bankruptcy in the near future. The labourer will go to America or starve unless prices improve shortly.

Effect.

Preferential treatment of the Colonies, which would lessen the present competition by excluding foreign (U.S. and Argentine) imports while admitting Colonial free would naturally benefit the growers of corn and beef and dairy produce in this country and encourage both stock raising and tillage. The protection also of the milling industry in Ireland would benefit both labourer and farmer and stock raisers who want bran. Free imports also send 25 million sterling to foreign countries yearly to buy timber which might all be grown at home, while millions of acres fit for forest lie waste and barren both in England and Ireland.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 136.

PROFESSOR D. D. WILLIAMS

(Department of Agriculture, University College, Aberystwyth).

I express only my own views. I have been on the staff of the University College for the last 6 years, and in connection with my Department I have a farm of 200 acres; I have only had this farm for about 6 months, but had experience in farming before taking up my appointment there, and I know a fair amount about the condition of agriculture in South Wales generally. Twelve years ago I was farming at my home in Cardiganshire (about 300 acres). My experience then was not very satisfactory. It was just possible to make both ends meet. I paid interest on my capital, but at a very low rate.

Agriculture is in rather a depressed state. The farmers in South Wales go in largely for the breeding of store cattle and sheep and the production of butter. They all produce a fair quantity of butter. Profits have decreased in every branch. In 1884 we were selling yearlings at £10 a-piece; in 1904 at £6 10s. and £7. If they are very poor there is difficulty in getting rid of the young store stock, even at £6 or £7. I have seen some sold this autumn at £5 10s.; I have bought some at £6. The Welsh farmers are not at all anxious to see the Canadian store stock admitted again. In 1884 we were selling sheep at £1 per head, now they are 15s. Lambs we sold at 10s. to 12s. a head in 1884; now we sell them at 7s. 6d. to 8s. Wool in 1884 we sold at 15s. per stone; now it is 7s. 6d. Butter we sold at 1s. 2d. per lb. in 1884; now there is a difficulty in getting 9d. That is not for improved butter from the dairy schools, but farm-made butter, and even this made 1s. 2d. some years ago. We sell very little crops in Wales. Most of the produce is consumed on the holding.

State of
Agriculture.

There has not been a corresponding fall in rents compared to the fall in the price. Rents are just about the same now as they were 20 years ago; only in very rare cases has there been a reduction. In former days the tenants were making fair profits, and all they can do now is to make both ends meet. Many fail to do that. Many of our farmers now go to London and Liverpool to the milk trade. In spite of this there is still a competition for the farms, and so the rents remain up. In many cases the labourers have gone to South Wales and have saved some money, £200 to £400, and they are always anxious to come back to take small farms. The rent is comparatively a matter of indifference to them: their great desire is to come back to the land. It is always very easy to let a farm in Wales unless it is a very big one. There is much competition, even with the labour difficulty and everything else. A small farm with us is one where the rent is less than £100 a year, and a large farm where it is over £100. There are very few farms which let at over £200. The amount of labour required on the small farms is not very great. Where a farmer has 2 or 3 children he is generally quite independent of outside labour. The children of the farmer live in his own house, but then many farmers have extra hands and cottages are required, as a very small percentage of farm labourers comes from the villages.

Rents.

Absolutely nothing has been done in Wales in connection with the improvement of cottages. Many have been allowed to tumble down, none have been built. The cottage accommodation is deficient both in point of quality and quantity—quality worse than quantity—and that accounts very largely for the labourers leaving the land. The cottages are provided by the owner of the land and in many cases he is neglectful, sometimes owing to want of means. The landowners sometimes do not realise the importance of maintaining the labour on the land.

Cottage
Accommodation.

There has been in recent years an increase of from 30 % to 40 % in the wages of farm labourers—at least 40% in some cases, especially near Glamorganshire. The nearer Glamorganshire we get the higher the wages.

Wages.

713 Co-operation.

I have had much to do with the formation of co-operative societies. There has been a development in the organisation of co-operative buying and selling in the Counties of Carmarthen, Cardigan, and Pembroke, and the other counties are taking it up too. We have at present 25 societies registered in that part of Wales, simply for the purchasing of seed, manures, and feeding stuffs. Nearly all the farmers in the district join those associations and, curiously enough, the large farmers are more willing to join than the small ones. The great trouble is in getting the farmers to be loyal to their societies. If they can buy cheaper elsewhere they will forsake the society immediately. Of the 25 societies about 15 are working very satisfactorily. The farmers are fairly loyal, but in the case of the other 10 they are not so loyal. I am not apprehensive of their future, I am certain that they are going to live and increase. The farmers will have sense enough to be loyal later on. These societies are young at present and I am afraid the farmers have not quite realised the true principles of co-operation. I account for the disloyal farmers in our association by the fact that our farmers as a class are in a very bad way, and when they go to the local tradesman they always buy on credit. He has always got them in hand, and whenever the farmer has not got the ready money he goes to the local tradesman. Our associations give one month's credit, and that is sometimes awkward for the men. To meet this difficulty which our farmers have in dealing with the co-operative associations, we have not established any credit banks or village banks. Credit banks would never be successful in Wales, because the custom has always been that when a farmer is in difficulty, if he is a trustworthy man at all, he goes to a neighbour who has a certain amount of capital, and that neighbour advances the money, and the farmer gets it free of interest. By means of co-operative associations, there has been a considerable reduction in the prices, and, what is more important than all, wherever they buy through a society of this kind they always have a guarantee. They are furnished with actual analyses of seeds, manures and feeding stuffs. That is a thing that was not known in our part of the country until within the last 5 or 6 years. We have no combination for sale, only for purchase. There is an idea of starting a combination for sale, but I do not anticipate that that will be taken up by the farmers as readily as co-operative buying.

Credit.

714

Butter Factories.

There has only been one attempt made to establish butter factories, so that the milk might be all put together and an average steady standard of butter secured. That was at Lampeter, in Cardiganshire, and it has been successful. The small number of cows kept is a difficulty, and the trouble of taking a small quantity of milk to the factory is so much that it eats up the profit very considerably. Near small towns there is a good deal of milk sold, and that pays very much better than poor butter. It is very good rich milk before it is churned, because the cows do not get much succulent food.

Markets.

Very little has been done in South Wales in connection with the organisation of markets. Attempts have been made to establish marts, but they have not been successful.

Railway Rates.

There would be a great advantage, if combination for sale were established, in obtaining reduction in railway rates by loading full trucks. That is one of our grievances. The consignments are so very small, coming in and going out, that the rates are very high indeed. That would put us in a better position in competing with Denmark and other countries which send us such a large quantity of butter, eggs, and so on.

715

Bull Clubs.

Attempts have been made and are being made, to form Bull Clubs for the purpose of improving stock, which is something new, and shows that there is some kind of awakening. Our farms are very small, so small that very few keep more than 8 or 10 cows, and those people occasionally make an effort to co-operate to form Bull Clubs. There are 3 or 4 of these Bull Clubs in the neighbourhood of Aberystrwyth. About 50 people would belong to a Club. They take shares in the Association, and the bull is purchased. They would give from £40 to £70 for a shorthorn bull, then they charge a small fee (so much a member) for the use of the bull. The local cattle of the country are not naturally good milking cattle, but since these Bull Clubs were introduced they are decidedly better. They compare unfavourably with cows in England; but we must take the feeding into consideration. The feeding is very bad indeed with us. The Welsh farmer will not believe in feeding his dairy cows liberally. If he has any good food, roots and corn, he gives that to his store cattle, and not to his dairy cows. The result is that some of these cows when they calve early in the season are nearly dry before they go out to grass.

Horse Clubs.

There is a rather large Horse Club in Carmarthenshire (the Carmarthen Stud Company) where they keep 3 horses, and there is one in Cardiganshire, and 1 or 2 in Montgomery; but I could not give any details regarding these. This system is quite in its infancy, but it is likely to grow. Those Clubs I am acquainted with have been of service already. I noticed in the balance sheet of the Carmarthen Stud Company that they have been very successful indeed, and there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the stock.

716

Education.

With reference to agricultural education, I can give you all details in connection with the work done by our College, and by the County Councils of South Wales. We have, in connection with the external work of the College, a County Lecturer in agriculture, an Instructor in horticulture, an Instructor in dyeing, and Instructresses in cookery and dairying. Last year the lecturer in agriculture delivered lectures at 9 centres in Cardiganshire, 7 in Carmarthenshire, 1 in Pembroke, and 2 in Montgomery, about 10 lectures being delivered in each centre. The average attendance at these lectures is from 40 to 60. The people seem to take a great interest in them, many of the farmers in those counties having started small experiments of their own, and they carry out experiments for the Department. We find them very willing to help us in every way. The cases where the farmers make the experiments after hearing lectures have been fairly numerous in the case of the older farmers, but more particularly so in the case of the young farmers. We have about 40 of those from the different counties affiliated to the College coming up to College every year for a short course of about 8 weeks. I always arrange certain experiments at the end of the Sessions for these young men to carry out at home, and last year there were 90 experiments carried out in the different counties. The results were particularly satisfactory. The County Council award scholarships in connection with dairy education to the farmers' daughters. Our Instructress visits centres in the Counties, and courses of about 10 lectures or demonstrations are conducted. Then the best of the pupils are selected and recommended to the County Council for scholarships to enable them to attend an advanced course of dairy instruction, theory and practice, at the College. They attend for 8 weeks, and are examined at the end of the course. If satisfactory they are awarded certificates.

Scholarships.

and the best of them are awarded further scholarships to return to a more advanced course, these being provided from the funds of the County Councils. The County Councils support us very strongly, particularly Carmarthen and Cardigan. Carmarthenshire last year spent close on £600 in agricultural education. These travelling schools go to certain villages. When we receive applications these are considered by the Technical Education Committee of the County Council, and then a grant is made, and we send an Instructress to the centre for 10 days. In many cases farmers' wives as well as farmers' daughters have attended the courses. It is all butter making in these travelling dairy schools, no cheese making. The meetings are held during the day in the Village Schools, and are well attended. In an ordinary average case there would be about 12 to 15 pupils, all girls. When we have had a school in a village that has given its course of instruction, we find as a consequence an improvement in the quality of the butter. There is not a great improvement, because Welsh people are very slow to adopt modern methods. Where we have adopted them there is an increase in the price they get for their butter. The butter we make at the College during the summer we have no difficulty whatever in selling at 1s. 2d. per lb., whereas the local farmers do not very often get 1s. There is always a great demand for butter made in the dairy school. It would improve our position very much if we could get a large and regular supply of the same quality. The dairy school is conducted during the summer, when the place is full of visitors, and our demand is very much greater then than it is in winter.

WITNESS No. 137.**MR. RICHARD WRIGHT**

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Prumplestown House, Castledermot, Co. Kildare).

I have 3 farms, 1 is all grass, 1 is mixed farming, 350 acres half grazing. I have been farming 25 years on a large scale and longer on a small scale. Carlow is our nearest market town, Athy the nearest in Kildare.

Agriculture in tillage, grazing and cattle breeding is much less remunerative than formerly. I grow very little wheat. I got 30s. a barrel 25 years ago, but sold my last wheat at 16s. 6d. I grow barley and oats. In 1882 barley fetched 15s. 6d., and in 1902 14s. In 1882 oats fetched 12s. 6d., in 1902 10s. per barrel. Potatoes I grow little; they were 4s. 6d. in 1902, and now 3s. to 3s. 6d. per cwt. Tillage is more difficult through dearer labour and lower prices. Grazing is less remunerative as stores are dearer and beef cheaper than formerly, foreign beef glutting the market. Rearing cattle pays best at present. I breed some pure Shorthorns, but generally Shorthorn crosses. The breed of cattle during the last 20 years has improved. My predecessor and I have kept pure-bred bulls with advantage to the neighbourhood. I do not buy young calves, I breed them. They are reared principally by small farmers. They use some milk but largely artificial food. Cattle breeding and rearing pay better if young cattle are sold as stores, but where kept, as in my case, the price of beef rules the ultimate profit. Beef in 1882 sold at 62s. to 65s. per cwt., in 1902 52s., now 48s. Mutton has been little better. I got in 1882 81s. or 82s., in 1902 61s., and now 50s. Wool in 1882 was 1s. per lb., in 1902 5d., and now 1s. Lambs in 1882 were 40s. each, and in 1902 30s. My difficulties are mainly due to the fall in prices through foreign competition, our markets are flooded with cheap foreign produce. Canadian stores being imported would affect the price of cattle with the people who raise them. Athy is a very good market for stall-fed cattle, but stall-feeding is a thing of the past.

The labouring population is constantly decreasing. Wages have increased, especially at harvest and haymaking.

There is difficulty and expense in getting our produce to the best markets. Railway rates are very high. Sending cattle to Dublin market is so expensive I sell all I can at home, sometimes at a loss.

Little advantage from improved education under the Agricultural Department is apparent yet, but it will be a great benefit in future. Through potato spraying, &c., there has been an improvement.

Our labourers are well off for cottages. The District Council has built many, which are a great boon to the labourers, and an advantage to the farmer also by helping to keep labour in the country. I prefer to build my own instead of letting them be built by the District Council because I should have had no control over the tenants, who might work elsewhere while I wanted labour.

Rent £1, labour £1 10s., feeding stuffs £1, manures £1, implements 3s., rates and taxes 2s. per acre.

There should be some small duty on manufactured goods and raw materials should be let in free. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would affect the labourers favourably, because if farmers and the country generally are more prosperous the labourer is bound to benefit.

WITNESS No. 138.**MR. ROBERT ANDREW ANDERSON**

(Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation, 22, Lincoln Place, Dublin).

The Association was established 11 years ago to carry on the work which had been begun by Sir Horace Plunkett, Lord Monteaigle, &c., of the introduction of co-operative methods among Irish farmers. On the question of fiscal reform, personally I have quite an open mind. I have never had time enough to consider the matter in all its complex bearings; but having regard to my official position as Secretary of this Society, which is composed of both free traders and the opposite, I do not think I should be justified in making any definite statement on the question. I would prefer to explain to the Commission how we found things in Ireland when we began our work, and how they appear to us to be to-day, and to give to the Commission the fullest information I can regarding the nature and effect of the work we are doing, and particularly with regard to the possibility of its rendering protection to some extent unnecessary.

State of
Agriculture.

Labour.

Railway Rates.

Education.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

Agriculture
(Miscellaneous).

721 Co-operative Creameries.

When we started our work in Ireland about 15 or 16 years ago we found the butter-making industry in a very bad way. Up to that time the introduction of creameries had been very limited, and those creameries which were established were run by proprietors entirely for their own profit. These people were pioneers in a great reform. It was they who first recognised that the business of butter-making had to be transformed from a home into a factory industry. They applied their intelligence and capital to the problem, and erected creameries, and turned out a very much better class of butter than was turned out before. But there was absolute want of identity of interest between the man who produced the milk and the man who made the butter. The object of the creamery proprietor was naturally to buy the milk from the farmers as cheaply as he could; and the object of the farmer was to supply him with as little milk and as much water as he could. So while this state of things existed the creamery system did not grow rapidly, nor was it satisfactory either to the proprietor or to the milk supplier. It occurred to Sir Horace Plunkett that here was an opportunity of introducing the co-operative element and after a great deal of work he succeeded in starting one society on co-operative lines. The farmers who owned the cows took shares in the undertaking in proportion to the number of cows which each owned, and borrowed such additional capital from their bankers as was required to complete the equipment. They worked this concern themselves on something akin to the plan of a joint stock company, with this exception, that the dividend on capital was limited to 5 % and that all the other profit went back to the milk suppliers, qua milk suppliers, in proportion to the value of the milk which they sent in. That was following, unconsciously but very closely on the lines of those creameries which have been so successful in Denmark. As time went on, other districts followed the example of this particular locality, which was in the county of Limerick, and now we have nearly 400 operating all over Ireland, wherever butter is made. They are all owned by the farmers and are financed and managed by them. We do not finance them or control their business arrangements or help them in any way, except by giving them advice. They were all started and are all worked on much the same lines. All the joint stock banks operating in Ireland are now prepared to make advances to co-operative societies at 4 %, which is roughly about 1 % under the existing current bank rate for individuals. The value of the annual output of the co-operative creameries is between £1,500,000 and £2,000,000. This is only an approximation, for our statistics for the last year are not complete. The membership of this movement now is close on 100,000 people: that is to say the great majority of those people are heads of families; so it seems really about half a million of people who are directly interested in it. Creamery dairying is on the increase, for it pays better than the ordinary system of dairying, where each man makes his own butter, and has to find a market for it. Butter-making is less profitable than cheese-making, but they do not make cheese instead of butter because the farmer finds it very important to rear his calves, which is not so easy if you make cheese. Then the quality of cheese in a great measure depends on the process of ripening, and that is a lengthy process which gives every opportunity for bad flavours to develop, whereas our butter trade is practically a fresh butter trade, and the butter is sold as soon as possible after it is produced, and there is not the same danger of deterioration. I am not quite clear whether it would be possible under present conditions to go into cheese-making. I do not want to say anything against the character of the people, but they are very backward in a great many things. One is in cleanliness, and in making cheese this is absolutely necessary. This is a very great difficulty—much more serious than it would appear. The cows' milk for cheese-making has to be absolutely pure. We have not tried to produce condensed milk in any of our creameries on co-operative lines; but milk is condensed by three factories in Ireland at present. We are thinking however of producing milk powder if we can get a process that is economical and will give good results. We have been investigating several, but they are not quite satisfactory. If we were sure of the market for the powder I think it would be a very good way of helping winter dairying.

Cheese-making.

723 Condensed Milk.

Federated Creameries.

In addition to the creameries, which are simply local organisations, generally speaking working over a parish, we have federated a certain number of them in a central body, which acts as their selling agency, and this body is called the Irish Co-operative Agency Society. It has its headquarters in Limerick, and has depôts and agents or travellers going about selling the produce.

Calf Rearing.

One problem we have to tackle in this dairying business is the rearing of calves. The tendency among farmers is to buy as little artificial food as possible, and when they do buy they often buy unintelligently. For example, they buy large quantities of maize. We do not care very much about maize. It is not a good food for producing bacon and is not a very suitable food for young cattle. For calves it is not easy enough of digestion. The effect of separating the milk from the cream by mechanical means is to take practically every particle of fat off it. You leave nothing but a residuum of something like .05 % of fat in the skim milk, and that is not a complete food for the calf. We have tried to get the farmers to make good the deficiency by putting cod liver oil in the milk. That does very well. And there are certain calf meals which also do very well.

724 Creameries and Pig Feeding.

It has been said that the creamery industry has injured the pig feeding industry and that of bacon-curing. It is quite true that pig feeding has declined in this country; but it is also true that in other countries where creamery dairying is still on the increase pig feeding has increased. If you take Canada and Denmark you find the production of pigs is increasing there, whereas it is decreasing in Ireland. I do not think it can be attributed to the creamery system. In the matter of pig-breeding we are not competing on even terms with the foreigner. I do not refer to any protective methods but to the fact that our methods of breeding and feeding the pigs are not up to date. Great improvements have been carried out in the South of Ireland, but there are parts where large numbers of pigs are kept at the present time where the breed is of a kind that it takes over a year to fatten. The Danish farmer produces two sets of pigs in a year. He always has a set of pigs fattening, but the period that is necessary to fatten a pig is only 6 months. The Danish farmer gets more per lb. dead weight for his pig than the Irish farmer. He produces a better article and gets more money for it, he produces it more economically and in a shorter time. With regard to the hog products a great deal of scientific work is required. If the people in this country were educated in the same practical way as the Danish farmers they would be just as prosperous. The free importation of Canadian and American bacon into this country is injurious to the pig-feeding industry, but the fact ought not to be lost sight of that the farmer in Ireland is often found selling his pig at 4d. a lb., and buying this American stuff at 6d., and he is doing it with his eyes open. The only explanation I can give is that he sells his pig for cash, and he buys his American bacon on credit.

In a few cases societies have bought stallions, and let them out for the use of their members, but that is all done now by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and we do not need to interfere with it. We have so much work to do that we like to leave to the Department all the functions it can perform. The breeding of horses by the small farmer is really gambling. He takes great risks. He has to work his mare while she is in foal. That is a very considerable risk. Then if his mare is not a very good animal, and he does not send her to a suitable horse, she may produce a weed, which will fetch nothing. Besides that he has usually to keep the horse for 4 years before he can sell it.

Horse-Breeding.

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We have been successful in combining the farmers for the purchase of their agricultural requirements, fertilisers, feeding stuffs and agricultural seeds. We have also in a smaller way got them to combine for the purchase of implements and machinery, but that has not been very successful. The machinery firms are very largely in the hands of their agents; and there is more than one combination of machinery manufacturers in England which makes it very difficult indeed to get terms for the co-operative societies which would enable them to sell in competition with the local agent. But that difficulty too is being removed. There are about 150 of these agricultural societies, and a number of the creameries also carry on a business in agricultural requirements. They all make their purchases through the Irish Agricultural Wholesale Society, which, like the Irish Co-operative Agency, is a federation of these agricultural societies, in the first instance for the joint purchase of their agricultural requirements, and in the second place for the sale of their produce. When you come to the sale of agricultural produce you come to the most difficult problem that you could possibly grapple with. There you find yourself at once confronted with any number of interests, all standing between the producer and the consumer. You require to produce in a very large way in order to economise; you require to be able to produce regularly in uniform quantities all through the year; and you require to be able to put your goods on the market at a minimum of expense. This is all done by our agricultural competitors in other countries, and the reason we have not done it here is that nobody had advised the people how to do it in the way that the State has done in Canada and elsewhere, until we began to do it. We are now gradually coming to the point where we can apply co-operative methods to practically every branch of the agricultural industry with great success, in particular to the marketing of agricultural produce. We have solved the problem in butter; we are solving it in eggs, but when you come to deal with grain, for instance the sale of barley to either the maltsters, the brewers or distillers, you find that a very difficult matter. The financial part is difficult, because the farmer requires cash for his grain. Then it is very difficult to be quite sure that the bulk of grain which you receive from the grower is equal to the sample which he sends in. You must have very careful grading and inspection; you must have a suitably equipped granary, with facilities for storing the grain and for classifying it; and then you must find your market. There are a number of districts in Ireland which grow very little barley; other districts grow large quantities, and when barley falls below the standard required by maltsters, instead of being sold at 15s. or 16s. a barrel, it is very often sold for 10s., so that the profit on the crop absolutely disappears. But even then the market for the grinding or feeding barley is so limited that he may not be able to sell it. We have more than once arranged for 1 society situated in a district where barley was grown, to have this barley sent by a special train to another part of the country where barley is not grown. This is about the best means we can devise for helping farmers to get the right kind of feeding stuffs, and at the same time relieve them from the risk of loss through want of a market.

Combination for Purchase.

Combination for Sale of Produce

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The wool trade in this country is small, but still there are some very large wool producers, particularly in the counties of Galway, Roscommon and Westmeath. The trade is practically in the hands of 2 or 3 firms. There is really no competition, and we are seeing whether we cannot introduce the element of competition in order that the farmers who produce wool may get a better price. That can only be done on co-operative lines.

Wool Trade.

In the North of Ireland the flax industry has been going downhill very fast for years back. About 40 years ago they grew 200,000 acres of flax. Now they grow less than 50,000 acres, and the quantity of flax which the spinners are bringing from foreign countries is increasing largely. We are assured by experts that we have everything we want in this country to produce a really good fibre, but we do not seem to have taken the same pains to produce it that the foreigner has done. Both his methods of cultivation and after-treatment are superior to ours. We are applying co-operation to that industry too. We are combining the farmers to own scutching mills, where the fibre is separated from the husk of the plant, and we are also arranging to establish a depôt in the Belfast market for the co-operative sale of this improved flax. One very important detail is the supply of the best seed. We are making arrangements with a firm in Rotterdam to supply seed of the highest quality to flax growers in the North.

Flax Industry.

Generally speaking, on the subject of seeds and manures, we have not interfered with the manufacturers' selling price, but we have eliminated, in the manure trade, the middle interest wherever a co-operative society has been established. The manure manufacturers have recognised our co-operative societies as trading bodies, and have accorded them best trading terms. The position of affairs before we started these societies for the purchase of agricultural requirements was that the individual farmer paid exactly as much per ton for his artificial manure to the local dealer as his ignorance or the cupidity of the local dealer enabled the latter to charge. He got no guarantee as to the percentages of phosphates and other ingredients in this manure. In my younger days farmers used to buy all artificial manures under the same name. They called it "guano," and a common way of testing it was for the farmer to take a handful out of the bag, fill his mouth with it, and chew it, and if it made him feel very sick he thought he was buying an excellent fertiliser. That is a fact. Now they are more scientific. They take a sample from the bulk, in accordance with the regulations under the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, and send it to an analyst for examination and assure themselves that what they are buying is up to the guarantee given on the invoice. We have succeeded in introducing for the first time into this country really high-class agricultural seeds in such a way as to put the smallest farmer, through the medium of his co-operative society, in a position to buy these requirements at wholesale prices. We have just completed a two-years' contract with the biggest seed growers in England for the supply of our agricultural seeds. For the first time probably the small Irish farmer will now be able to get really high-class seeds. Later on we hope to put him in the position, through the same means, of selling his produce at retail prices. That is the whole object of the Co-operative Association.

Seed and Manures.

728

729 Bacon Curing.

The farmers have a fairly good outlet for suitable pigs in the existing bacon curing establishments, but they are not satisfied that they are getting full value for their pigs in these concerns, and in two districts attempts are being made to establish large co-operative bacon curing factories on the lines of those worked in Denmark, in which country the proprietary and the co-operative factories work side by side. The largest curers in Ireland, Messrs. Denny, also own the largest curing factory in Denmark. The ownership of the factory is far less important than the production of a high-class raw material, and so long as we stick to our present system of breeding and feeding in a haphazard way we cannot expect to compete with the foreign farmer who pays attention to these matters.

Small Farmers.

Our farmers are not like English farmers. Out of some 500,000 farmers in Ireland, we have 200,000 who live on holdings of between 1 and 15 acres. But it is to these very small men, whom you would hardly dignify by the title of farmers, that our co-operative work has been so beneficial. A large farmer can go into the market and buy what he wants for cash at reasonable prices; and, generally speaking, has a fairly good market for his moderately large output. But when you get to the small tenant farmer in the West of Ireland, even producing a good article, but only producing in such very small quantities that he never gets the real value of it, it is only by associating with his neighbours that he can possibly hope to get for his produce on the market anything like a reasonable price.

730 Railway Rates.

In our Society we have said hard things about Irish railway companies, but we have never joined in the general chorus of abuse against them, that they are robbing the public for the sake of their shareholders, etc. We argue, in talking to railway men, and also in talking to the farmers themselves, that when the latter learns to systematise his business, to have his goods ready for market on certain days, and by co-operating with his neighbours to have truck loads, instead of small cwt. lots, he can demand and the railway companies will make concessions to him which he never could have got under the present circumstances. I think that is one way in which we may cheapen our distribution. The railway companies have not done all they might do to provide proper facilities for the conveyance of produce. For example, our butter and eggs do not reach the markets in England in the same condition that the butter and eggs of other countries do, and without making any claim for lower freights (I do not think the freights are much of an obstacle myself), the railway companies might have met us, and ought to meet us more than half way in providing those facilities.

Land Transfer.

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At present the transfer of the land from the landlord to the tenant is going on, not quite so fast as we could wish, but still rapidly, and a new state of society is about to result from it. You will have a great number of small proprietors, who will still have the same foreign competition to meet, who will have to pay a fixed though terminable annuity to the State for their land; and who will no longer be dealing with the squeezable landlord, who was in the past prepared to share the results of a bad year with them. It is very little use for the State to put people in possession of land, and to change their annual rent to an annuity, even if that annuity is considerably less than the amount of the rent which they used to pay, unless they at the same time place those people in a position to buy the raw materials for their industry at bed-rock prices, and to sell their produce to the greatest advantage. If that is not done, the mere creation of a peasant proprietary in this country may prove to be something else than an unmixed blessing. Without co-operation among these small men, the peasant proprietor will in a few years be in just as bad a plight as when he was a tenant farmer. I have had sufficient experience of the effects of the Purchase Act to say without any hesitation that it has been a benefit, if it were only that the farmer has now absolute security in his holding. Before he had neither security of tenure nor had he any security that his rent might not be raised if he improved his condition. I lived all my younger days in the South of Ireland, and I knew the condition pretty well, and I can say this of my own knowledge, that in the latter 70's farmers were very much averse to even whitewashing their houses, or making their places look smart, for fear they might have to pay an additional rent. When the Land Court began its operations, even good farmers, and men who were otherwise perfectly honest, when they found the period for the revision of their rent was approaching, used to deliberately deteriorate their farms and crop them to death previous to their re-inspection, in order that when the Sub-Commissioners came for that purpose on the farm their rents might be reduced. These are facts, and I think a great deal of the trouble in this country is due to that particular method of fixing rents on the apparent value of the land rather than on the basis of prices of live stock and produce. The old system really was a premium upon bad farming. Industry was paralysed. The Purchase Act provides the incentive to improvement, and the people are appreciating that fact, and are rising to the occasion, but without the co-operative system it cannot be permanently successful.

732

Funds.

The funds necessary for organising these Agricultural Societies were in the first instance mainly contributed by Sir Horace Plunkett himself as a philanthropic enterprise. Then we were aided by an organisation in England, called the Co-operative Union, whose propaganda was confined in England to the starting of co-operative shops or stores, with which our Society has nothing to do, but which recognised our work as one which they might legitimately help, and they gave us a small subsidy for two or three years. This Union is a body of working men with its headquarters in Manchester, one that Charles Kingsley, Tom Hughes and Vansittart Neale were associated with as founders. After working about 5 years the amount of work to be done was too much for any one man to pay for, or to be left to chance, so the idea occurred to Mr. Plunkett to call a meeting of the people who had been taking an interest in this work, and put a practical scheme before them for the purpose of getting funds to carry it on. This was done and our Association was incorporated. Its members undertook to pay an annual subscription to it for 5 years, it being estimated that at the end of 5 years we should have done so much work that it would go on by itself. After 5 years we found that we had to ask those people to put their hands in their pockets still further. One or two gentlemen behaved very liberally; one in particular gave us £25,000; and another gave £6,000. Sir Horace Plunkett has given us in one way or another more than £10,000. For a long time he used to hand over to us his official salary as Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture. Now some of the funds for our work are contributed by the Department of Agriculture for the purpose of organising such societies as the Agricultural Credit Societies

(the agricultural banks that conflict with no interests except the interests of the usurer), and societies for the carrying on of small industries subsidiary to Agriculture. This Society owes its inception absolutely to the work and the personal assistance of Sir Horace Plunkett.

The banks are organised on what is called the Raiffeisen plan; that is to say the members of these banks pledge their unlimited liability for all the debts of the bank. They are registered under a Special Authority of the Treasury under the Friendly Societies Act, and as soon as the Society is formed they borrow money either from a Joint Stock Bank, or from local persons who have money to deposit, and, in some cases, from the Department of Agriculture, or the Congested Districts Board. With this small capital, which is generally speaking £100, or £200, they begin experimenting by making loans to their members for productive purposes. The person who borrows money from one of these banks has to state the purpose and the length of time for which the money is required. He has to enter into a bond for the re-payment of the money, and, if he misapplies the loan, his sureties are called upon to pay it up, and the man himself is made amenable as far as his means will admit. As far as our experience goes—and we have 220 of these banks in operation—there has been no case of a bad debt, no single case where a borrower defaulted, and they have lost no money. In one case, in a very poor district in Ireland, they have got over £1,800 on deposits locally. This money is circulated in the districts instead of being hoarded. It is lent out about twice a year, and always for a productive purpose. Side by side with that I might say one of our immediate objects is to establish a system of live-stock insurance in order that where money is lent for the purchase of live-stock the risk may be provided for. The actual borrowers are the committee of the bank, but the whole of the members of the bank have to indemnify those men to the extent of all their worldly goods. The members of the bank derive no advantage out of it. Nobody is paid anything for his services.

Credit Banks.

You may assume that the country is now fully equipped, and that there are sufficient, or very nearly sufficient, creameries, to cater for the wants of all purely dairying farmers. But we contemplate going a good deal further than that, and extending this system to what we call winter dairying, and applying it to the tillage districts. It is perfectly feasible and would be an enormous advantage to the people in these districts. It would be a means of providing profitable employment for people who now have to leave the country to seek it elsewhere. In order to carry out the scheme on that extensive scale we might have three times as many creameries as at present. 1,000 or 1,200 creameries would convert Ireland into a dairying country, and you would still be able to find a perfectly good market for the butter. At one time Ireland was producing £14,000,000 worth of butter in the year. There is no reason in the world why Ireland, if the butter is equally well made should not take the place of Denmark altogether in the English market. Assuming we were able to extend our present dairying system to the whole of Ireland, and include the winter dairying as well, then the difficulty of a continuous market would disappear by degrees. There would be a difficulty in extending the system during the first few years until we can produce a sufficient amount to handle economically, but when the small farmers learned the advantages of it they would very soon come in, and by means of our co-operative societies we can get reforms carried out very much more quickly. There would also be a difficulty in the collection of the milk. The creameries would have to send round for it and should have to centralise the manufacture of butter, and have a number of smaller creameries where the cream was simply separated from the milk pasteurised, and sent to head-quarters to be churned. The winter supply of butter could not be made profitable to the farmer taken by itself, but taken as an industry carried on all the year round it would indirectly be more profitable to him to produce a larger proportion of butter than he now does in the winter months. It takes 1.75 gallons of milk to produce a pound of butter in winter, for which he would probably get something like 1s. a pound. That means he would get something less than 6d. a gallon for the milk, after deducting the cost of manufacture. At present the farmer gets on an average about 4d. a gallon for his milk from the creameries all the year round, and the actual return to the farmer from his cows, including the calf, would be £3 a head less than the actual return net to the Danish farmer.

Winter Dairying

We are not a systematic nor a tidy people, and we are cursed with rather a stupid sort of pride, which resents any interference in matters of that kind. If our creameries were to do what they do in Denmark, that is, have an inspector attached to each creamery whose duty it would be to go round and see the cow-houses, cows, milk vessels and clothes that the milkers wear, and report any person who did not do his duty, that inspector would have a lively time. In Denmark if a man sends impure milk to the creamery they put a great red label on the can when it is going back, so that the whole country knows what he has done. If the can itself is dirty, but the milk is fairly clean, they put a white label on it. In Denmark this particular kind of inspection is done by the creameries themselves. There is also Government inspection of the creameries; but the inspection of the cow-shed, cows, vessels, milk and workers is purely voluntary, and submitted to by suppliers of the creameries. Matters in this respect are much better than when we began—they were very bad then.

Inspection of Dairies.

Oilcake is a by-product from the flax industry and we hope to develop its production to a very great extent as soon as we teach people how to save the flax seed.

Oilcake Making.

In Denmark the average yield from a milch cow would be about 800 gallons. As far as we can ascertain it, the average yield from a milch cow here is under 500 gallons. The Danish farmer breeds his cow for milk altogether; beef is of secondary importance. Here our cattle trade is of paramount importance. It is infinitely more important to us than the butter trade, important though the butter trade is, so that we could not sacrifice the beef qualities of the animal purely for the sake of making butter. But we are trying to devise some means for selecting stock which will produce cattle of a good milking strain, and will also fatten. Kerry cows, having regard to the little upon which you can keep them, are a wonderfully good milking cattle. Their size is rather

Selection of Stock.

737

against them as beef animals, but they are very hardy. I have seen a case where a Kerry cow gave over 700 gallons of milk in a season, but that is very exceptional. The breed of cow in our country is generally speaking half-bred Shorthorn.

Danish Methods.

Many years ago a system of practical education was introduced into Denmark, which is second to none in the world. I know many Danish farmers. I have been there, and the men strike you at once as being not only practical, but scientific farmers. They have got the practical scientific training which shows them exactly what they ought to do. In every branch of their business they make the most of everything. They are a very economical people. They live comfortably, but cheaply. They are very thrifty. It will take a great many years of education to bring our people up to that pitch. That is one reason why a Danish farmer does well at this trade. Then another reason is that the Danish people had the start of us. They established their first creameries 25 years ago, and secured the trade before we were able to get in. Then we had to compete with them. Further, the State assists them by providing splendid facilities for instruction. It also provides a system of inspection round these creameries, and where anything is found going wrong the expert who visits them on behalf of the Danish Department of Agriculture is able at once to show them how to put it right. Further, it has assisted the butter makers by making arrangements on their behalf with the carrying companies for the conveyance of their produce to the English markets. As far as I know there is no actual subsidy given to the butter maker in Denmark.

738

Suggested Farmers' Budget.

If it were possible for this Commission to suggest that the Department of Agriculture here might direct the attention of its statistics branch to the making out of a farmers' budget then you would get to the root of this question more quickly than in any other way. Take typical cases of farmers of 30, 40, or 100 acres, find out what these men spend on each article used in their household; their income, their expenditure, and approximately their net profit. If you had those facts before you, you would be able to tell at once where the shoe would pinch if a duty were imposed on imported goods, or any change were made in the existing fiscal system.

WITNESS No. 139.**CAPTAIN FREDERICK HUGH CRAWFORD**

(Wheaten Starch and Corn Flour Manufacturer, representing Messrs. Alexander Crawford & Son, 20, Mill Street, Belfast).

We are manufacturers of wheaten starch and cornflour.

739

State of Starch Trade.

20 years ago we were manufacturing 68 tons of wheat into starch every week. For the last year or two we have been doing 35 to 40. We only employ about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the men and women we did 20 years ago. This represents that much less wheat is being grown, as practically all good wheat grown about Belfast and 20 miles around comes to us for starch making; millers only using a little now for wheat meal. If we do not buy the wheat the farmers have to crush it up into meal to feed their cattle. In some cases it pays to do this, but not in all.

Irish Wheat Prices.

I have a schedule here of the lowest price, the highest price, and the average price we paid for Irish wheat for the last 10 years:—

	Lowest. Per cwt.	Highest. Per cwt.	Average. Per cwt.
1895	5/-	5/10	5/5
1896	5/6	7/-	6/3
1897	6/6	7/-	6/10½
1898	5/-	7/6	6/-
1899	5/6	6/-	5/9
1900	5/6	6/-	5/9
1901	5/6	7/-	6/3
1902	5/9	6/3	6/-
1903	6/3	6/9	6/6
1904	6/9	7/3½	7/-
1905	7/3	7/9	7/6

740

Decline in Wheat Growing.

For a number of years back all the wheat we used was grown in the north of Ireland, parts of the north-east being specially suitable for wheat, and many districts yielding from 25 to 35 cwt. per statute acre.

Owing to the low prices of wheat for several years past farmers have practically ceased growing it, and last year we had to go to England and Scotland to buy, as there was practically no wheat in the north of Ireland. We do not touch foreign wheat so long as we can get home grown. A considerable amount of the land that was used at one time for wheat-growing has been turned into grazing. Of course that means less employment for labourers in the country.

Owing to cheap foreign wheaten starch being dumped into the United Kingdom for the last 10 or 20 years, at under cost price, the starch trade in the north of Ireland is rapidly disappearing. 20 or 30 years ago there were 8 wheaten starch makers in Belfast alone. For the last 12 years there has only been our firm. I attribute that chiefly to the dumping of cheap foreign wheat starch, and to a larger consumption of maize starch. We can hold our own still in the very highest grade of wheaten starches, but that is a comparatively small amount. There is a high-class maize starch, and there is a high-class wheat starch, used for slightly different purposes. In the high-class maize starch (the present price of which is 13s. 9d. per cwt.) the Paisley manufacturers can compete favourably against foreign productions, but in the low grades they cannot; and now-a-days it is the ability to utilize the by-products which settles the question as to whether you are able to live or not. The American corn starch (Pearl Brand) when I left Belfast was quoted 8s. 9d. per cwt., and the Scotch manufacturers were quoting 9s. 6d., I understand at a loss. To compete with the American Pearl starch they made a special Scotch Pearl starch, but even so, the Americans have still dropped to 9d. a cwt. under the price. 9d. a cwt. at 8s. 9d. is a considerable profit. The Americans are selling that under cost price.

Causes of Change. 741

Comparatively little American wheaten starch comes into the British Isles. The great competitors with us are Hungary, Austria and Germany. They dump starch at prices far below what we can produce for. I had occasion to go to Halle in Germany some 3 years ago. A new process of starch manufacturing had been brought out, and I went over to see it. While there I took the occasion to ask the price of their best starch, and found it about equal to our own, while they were dumping it at £2 a ton less than we could produce it at in England. So far as I could gather the cost of production was about the same there as here. The general result has been to practically close 7 out of 8 of the firms that were formerly in existence in Belfast and doing well; and to put an end to the wheat growing industry in the north of Ireland.

Maize Starch.

Wheaten Starch.

Effect of Dumping.

742

We make wheaten cornflour, but it cannot be produced as cheaply as maize cornflour. The consumption has rather gone down. The public will not pay the high price, as so much cheap cornflour is coming in from the Continent. Wheaten cornflour is 30s. a cwt. In Paisley they make maize cornflour only.

Cornflour.

At one time we exported starch to America. Our customers were very pleased with it and informed us that they could get nothing like it in America, but that owing to the high tariff of 50 % (and I think it is more now) much to their regret they could not continue buying from us.

Exports.

So far as we could judge the duty of 1s. per quarter on foreign wheat did not materially raise the price of British wheat.

Duties and Prices.

WITNESS No. 140.

Written Evidence.

MR. G. E. FRANCIS.

(Late of H.M. Woods and Forests; King Stephen's Mount, Henwick, Worcester).

Sown end of August to 15th September—spring wheat is put in the moment the weather will permit—average yield in one district 15 bushels per acre (1883-91). Very rarely stacked—almost always put into barns. All grain sold by the bushel and weight as under. Wheat 60 lb., barley 48, oats 34, peas 60, maize 56.

Wheat growing in Canada.

743

1891	Yield of barley	30-40 bushels per acre sold	@	55 cents.
	oats	40-60	@	50 cents.
	peas	25-30	@	75 cents.
	maize	70	@	65-70 cents. (Lake Erie countries.)

Farmers for the most part own their own land, tenants pay about 3 dollars per acre. Occupations run from 50 to 300 acres. The cost of growing wheat is about 55 cents or 2s. 3½d. per bushel.

Yield per acre very variable—average about 17 bushels, varies from 11 to 12 up to 36 or even 40 bushels in exceptional cases; in 1894 was as low as 8-10 bushels. Prices of wheat on Chicago and Kansas markets do not always correspond, being influenced by local circumstances, quantity used for feeding, &c. The price of wheat in Kansas in 1894 during harvest was 1s. 3d. per bushel rising to 1s. 7d. and 1s. 8d. in the autumn on account of the demand for hog feeding. Early in December, 1904, No. 2 wheat,* 200 miles west of Kansas city, sold for 1s. 10d. No. 3, 1s. 8d. to 1s. 9d.—(2s. 1d. December, 1902). After fair trial the western farmers prefer wheat to maize for feeding rather young hogs. The wheat is "headed" only 12 inches below the ear—the straw is burned—stacks yield 225-250 bushels. The following is the cost of Kansas wheat per acre—2 systems of harvesting:—

Wheat growing in Kansas.

744

Produce 17 bshls @ 2/1 26 cents (Dec., 1902)	Ploughing	.. ..	\$1.00	Ploughing	.. ..	\$1.00
	2 Harrowing	.. ..	0.25	2 Harrowing	.. ..	0.25
	Drilling	.. ..	0.35	Drilling	.. ..	0.35
	Seed	.. ..	0.85	Seed	.. ..	0.85
	Harvesting	.. ..	0.85	Harvest, heading and stacking	.. ..	1.25
	Binding twine	.. ..	0.25	Thrashing	.. ..	1.00
	Shocking	.. ..	0.20	Hauling to market	.. ..	34
	Hauling and stacking	.. ..	0.70			
	Thrashing and	.. ..	1.00			
	Hauling to market	.. ..	0.34			

\$5.79 = £1 4s. 1½d.

\$5.04 = £1 1s. 0d.

The stacks are not thatched but kept for 6 weeks to allow of evaporation and fermentation—no cattle are fed on these farms—no roots are grown; the labour is done by men in the neighbourhood at contract prices. No labour is employed in winter except men to look after the horses.

* No. 2 is the best in Kansas.

745 Wheat growing in Kansas—continued.

In 1895 an English farmer in Kansas, growing on the Bonanza system, estimated its cost on the English market at 25s. 6d. to 26s. 6d. No farmers except those of Argentina, who have a great advantage in the gold exchange, can put wheat on the English market so cheaply as the U.S. Bonanza farmer. The Canadian Homestead farmer, even with his larger yield, will be 2s. or 2s. 6d. dearer. The low prices of wheat ruling in England in the period 1891-1900 seriously affected growers in all countries supplying us, probably Argentina alone was able to send at a profit, though not infrequently at a loss. The Kansas farmer who supplied the information as to cost given above contemplated putting his land down in "Farfalla" (Lucerne) and fattening pigs. Large numbers of U.S. farmers were bankrupt in this period; many Bonanza farms went out of cultivation and this naturally had its effect on production, and must be reckoned among the causes of subsequent shortage. The Governor of Kansas State in the *N. Am. Review of Jan*, 1896, says that more than 10,000 farmers in this State are annually dispossessed of their homes by foreclosures of mortgages and farms once regarded as ample security for 1,500 dollars, are now often sold at the amount of the mortgage or less and well-to-do farmers are gradually being forced into bankruptcy. The profits on wheat-growing with wheat at 37s. 6d. per qr. under a duty of 2s. 6d. per qr., Canadian at 1s., are as follows:—

746

Country.	Yield per acre. Bushels.	Cost of putting on Market per Qr.	Sale value. Per acre.	Profit Per acre.
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
U.S. "Bonanza" ..	14	29 0	65 7½	14 10½
U.S. "Homestead" ..	20	31 0	93 9	16 3
Canada	20	29 0	72 6	21 3
Russia	10	30 6	46 10½	8 9
Argentina	14	22 6	39 4½	26 3
United Kingdom.. ..	32	30 0	150 0	30 0

Relation between prices of wheat, flour and bread.

400 lbs. wheat make 280 lb. flour, 1 qr. wheat yields 347 lb. of flour and, if mixed English and foreign, gives 483 lb. bread or say 120 4-lb. loaves and as 120 halfpence = 5s., every advance of 5s. per qr. on wheat entitles the baker to an extra ½d. When the average price of wheat, mixed English and foreign, is 35s. the miller will supply the flour at about 28s. per sack, one-fifth less. (Millers rule for reckoning price of flour.)

Deduct 3d. = 2½% discount, add 5s., amount allowed by bakers to cover cost of yeast, making, baking and delivery—total 32s. 4d., but 97 4-lb. loaves @ 5d. = 40s. 5d., leaving 8s. 1d. clear profit = 25% nearly, on outlay. With wheat at 25s. per qr. bread at 4d. the loaf would yield this profit, with an advance of ½d. for every 5s. advance in wheat.

747

Bakers are said to prevent the millers from selling flour in small quantities to households for bread making by threat of refusing to deal with them, and by selling small packets of flour at a high price compel the public to buy bread instead of making it.

WITNESS No. 141.

Grazing.

MR. GEORGE H. ACTON

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Bridgemount, Castlebar, County Mayo, Ireland).

I am prepared to give evidence on growing store cattle; I also keep some sheep, chiefly mountain sheep, and to a small extent fatten cattle. I farm 600-700 acres and let 500 acres, 30-40 acres I keep in tillage, some of it in grain, about 10 Irish acres in potatoes, and 2-5 acres in turnips, just sufficient for stall feeding.

748

State of Agriculture.

The margin of profit is so small that I would not sink capital in farming—in fact, I am taking it out. This applies to all branches of farming in which I am engaged—especially to tillage. I do not breed at all. I buy from the breeders. All the small tenants breed, and rear calves. I rear cattle from 2 years old up to 3 years, and sell them to the men of mid-Ireland, Meath, and West Meath, who hold rich fattening lands; they feed them and sell them in Liverpool market. I have house room to feed some 50 head of stalls, and my father used to do that, but I have come down gradually to feed 30 head. This year I am only feeding 16 head, and in future I shall not stall feed at all. I cannot make them pay for the actual food given them. The profit is most in sheep, because we can sell fat lambs. A number of years past the price of wool was 2s. to 2s. 4d., and now it is from 6d. to 9d.—it fluctuates a little. Quite recently it has improved. I used to breed horses, but the price of second-class horses has fallen considerably, and although I can get as much money for a first-class hunter or carriage horse as formerly, still the second-class horses—and you are bound to have a number when you are breeding, and a number of worthless ones—sold for so small a price that breeding became unremunerative, and I gave it up. I got about £150 or £200 for 4-year-old hunters, and was able to sell inferior and unsound horses at a fairly remunerative price. I sometimes got £50 or £60 for a blemished horse, now a second-class horse, if damaged at all, has to be sold at an utter sacrifice. I had always, and have still round me, very good stallions, King's Premier horses, so that we have had no trouble. The fee charged for stallions is from £3 to £5. We got a fair portion of our high-priced horses from the hunting districts of Mayo and Galway. We hunted them ourselves to get them clever and handy.

Horse breeding.

There has not been a very great change in the methods of agriculture in Ireland of late years, except that land is going out of cultivation. A great part of western Ireland is in the hands of small tenants, who cultivate their petty holdings with their family, and they probably carry on just as much tillage as their forefathers, but otherwise tillage is being abandoned. The reason is that oats are only 5s. a cwt. and other crops in proportion. Beef and mutton are imported so cheaply from foreign countries that we cannot produce at home and sell in competition and make a profit.

It costs me nearly £1 a head to sell any cattle I fatten in Liverpool, including railway, shipping, feeding, driving, &c. I am told railway rates are less in proportion from America.

Twenty years ago I could get any number of good men, and 30 years ago so could my father. For the last 15 years I have been working with only growing boys, waiting until they are 15 or 17 or 18, when they go to America, and a few old men who are too old to emigrate to America or go over to the English harvests. The agricultural population is going to America to a greater extent than to the towns. Taking the men all round America seems to be the place they aim at. They all intend to go as soon as they are of age.

Wages are extremely low, and have always been low; still I am now paying to boys what I once paid to men. That only means 6s. to 9s. a week. 9s. is the highest wage in my district paid to men capable of working horses. The reason for the low wages is that there is no work for a labourer except agricultural work, and that paying so badly we cannot afford to pay high wages. Therefore all those who are any use leave the country, and only boys and old men remain.

We have no question of labourers' cottages because every man I employ is a tenant, having his own holding, and building his own house on his holding. No man is what you would describe as a mere labourer; he could not live and keep a family on 7s. to 8s. a week. I only employ men who have holdings of their own, build their own houses and occupy their spare time in working, eking out their own farming by occasional labour elsewhere.

There has been some development of the system of co-operative buying and selling with regard to stock. I myself have formed one agricultural society. We do not buy or sell live animals. We buy artificial manures, seeds, sulphate of copper for spraying potatoes, and, to a small extent, machinery. All the artificial manure, principally super-phosphate of lime, required by the men within a radius of four miles is purchased by this society. Altogether I am satisfied with its progress, and think the system is desirable, and should be encouraged. That is the general opinion of those who have made use of it, otherwise they would have abandoned it. Our local society is affiliated with the Central Society in Dublin which has branches all over Ireland. We send orders through the head office, which buys from the manufacturer in large quantities. If we want a ton of cake and the other societies each want 20 or 30 or 50, the Central Society gets the combined order. But this is the least advantage; the greatest is, that we are strong enough, by combining, to fight the ring of manure manufacturers who heretofore charged us prohibitive prices.

There is very little agricultural education in the district. It is hard enough to find time to attend the National Schools, and get enough education to read and write. There has been some attempt at agricultural education, the Government sending round demonstrators and lecturers, but it is too recent to know what effect it will have.

Our local rates have been increasing, although we got great assistance from the Local Government Act.

I have heard that it is proposed to re-admit Canadian stores into the United Kingdom. That would be bound to extinguish our industry. The effect of admitting Canadian stores would be to lower the price of home-bred stores immediately. I assume Canadian stores could be bought for several pounds per head less than our home stores of the same size. I sell rising 3-year-olds at £12 and I am told that Canadian cattle of the same age, size, weight and quality would be £3 less. If that be so our home stores would drop £3 a head. That is about the profit I make by keeping a home-bred animal 6 or 8 months. All the profit would thus be gone unless I bought them cheaper than I do, which would not be possible, because the men who rear are not well paid at present. It costs a considerable amount to rear a calf from the day it is born until it is 4 months old. That is the expensive time of a beast's life. Cattle rearing means a livelihood to all the small tenants in the West of Ireland. They must each keep a milch cow to feed the family. They rear a calf each year on that cow and they buy a second calf from a large dairying district, and they rear the two calves on the one cow, eking out with calf meal, &c. Then they sell the calves when about 2 years old. They only get £7 to £8 for them, and that does not leave much profit. They cannot possibly sell for £4. If Canadian stores were re-admitted, quite apart from the question of disease, it would be fatal to the industry in Ireland, and especially to the small holder. There is nothing he could well turn to in place of it. It is very hard for him to keep sheep, for he has very poor fences—they are little sod walls. The fighting over trespass is very great as it is; and he could never succeed in keeping the small class of sheep that get over any sort of fences. Rearing of calves is what he relies on most.

On the low lands we raise Shorthorn cattle. Of course they are not pedigree, but crosses. They are not as good as Rosecommon, for instance. We suffer, perhaps, more from want of good bulls than we do from want of good stallions; but lately premiums have been given, and for the last 2 or 3 years we are in a far better position. All sorts of cattle besides shorthorns, are raised. As you go to the west you get into the wild mountainous districts of Connemara, where you rear the Polled Angus and Kylloe altogether.

Unless we have something to assist the agricultural industry it will go from bad to worse. It is in a very languishing, if not a dying, condition at the present. The duty on grain would not have a great effect at the amount suggested. Oats is the only grain grown at all round me. I attach most importance to a tariff on meat, practically all the others are negligible quantities. Suppose there were a minimum tariff of 5% on beef, that would allow to the mid-Ireland grazier 15s. to 18s. a head more than he at present gets on fat cattle. When he purchased from me I should not get more than half that—say 9s., and in turn the smaller man would only get half that 9s.—4s. 6d., but we should all get something, and that would be to the good.

Causes of Change.

749

Railway Rates.

Labour.

Wages.

750

Cottage
Accommodation.

Co-operation.

Education.

751

Local Rates.

Canadian Cattle.

752

Cattle Breeding.

Duties.

Effect on Meat.

753 Effect on Meat
—continued.**Effect on Potatoes.**

The man who fattens would get most. If I knew that beef would not fall under a certain amount, say 36s. per cwt. live weight in Liverpool, which would be fairly remunerative, and by a tariff coming into operation automatically I was secured against it going lower than that, I would put more money into agriculture, and therefore employ more labour. At present the danger is that if I were to put money into agriculture the importation of American stores might rob me of it without warning. The 5 % duty on meat is the only part of the proposals that would affect us. I am only interested in the supply of live meat. We should encourage slaughter on our side of the Atlantic. In order to get £2 a ton for potatoes I have to rail them across Ireland, and sell them in Dublin. I pay £2 10s. for the wagon load of 6 tons, plus commission to sale masters, and many minor charges. It leaves a very small profit indeed. We suffer from competition from Scotland and England. Scotland sends in great quantities when the price goes up in Dublin market. If the foreign produce coming into the northern ports of Great Britain, such as Hull, Newcastle, and Leith, forces out Scotch supplies which would otherwise come into those markets, the Dublin market feels that effect. This year the crop is absolutely a failure in the west. Of 10 acres of potatoes I did not average more than 3 tons return on an Irish acre, whereas last year I averaged nearly four times as much. An Irish acre is about a fourth, or not quite a third larger than an English acre. Supposing we got the whole of the benefit of a 5 % tax that would be 12s. 6d. per acre even with the very poor crop that we had this year, and fully £1 an acre with a normal crop. Potatoes being so low in price a tax of 2s. 6d. a ton would have the effect of steadying the price more. At present the price fluctuates very much. Last year I got 6d. per stone for all the potatoes I sold on Dublin market. This year I get 3d. I would be in favour of a tax on imported potatoes. There are not many very large farmers in the County of Mayo. We had some who came in and started farming on a large scale, with up-to-date methods and machinery; but some of them failed, and now it is mostly done by small men, who are becoming peasant proprietors. They have been small holders, and they are the only men who are able to make a living out of agriculture, because their labour, and that of their families, goes into their small holdings. They are extremely poor, and they live from hand to mouth. They bring their oats to the local dealer, and exchange them for flour, tea, and commodities for the household. Money seldom passes. As they are becoming peasant proprietors any improvement in prices, or improvement in conditions, would wholly accrue to them. They combine all three classes, holders, occupiers, and labourers.

754**Effect on Labour.****WITNESS No. 142.**

MR. RICHARD GRANES ADAMSON

(Farmer and Grazier, Addinstown, Athboy, County Meath).

755

I farm 1,300 statute acres, mostly store land—about 150 acres of finishing land. I get my beasts in Galway, West Meath, Longford, Mayo and Clare—principally in the Western Counties. In the spring oldish cattle are bought to try and make beef of them, and in the autumn principally young cattle to hold over the winter and feed. The soil is moor land; other manures would be better for what we call upland, but basic slag is the only manure I use. I put on $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton per acre once in every 5 years; most people do not put on so much. I have never used it on clay lands. Half the quantity over 2 years—say 5 cwt. to the acre—would not have the same effect as 10 cwt. every 5 years. It brings out the natural qualities of the soil and increases grasses wonderfully, white clover and red clover; all the best grasses come up, and it even seems to do away with rushes, and they are very hard to get rid of.

State of Agriculture.

Profits have decreased about £1 an acre in the last few years, and it has been gradually getting harder to make money out of cattle. The price of beef has gradually fallen, and this year is lower than ever. The change in profits is principally due to the importation of foreign beef. My cattle go to Manchester, but the butchers round there buy chiefly foreign stuff, except a few nice beasts for their best customers. They buy most of the meat now in Birkenhead which they used to buy from us.

Methods Abroad.

I was in Australia for 10 years; I found that labour was higher, but the fallowing of the land was much cheaper. In most cases no manure at all was used; it was nearly all fallowing—ploughed in the summer and then the corn put on it in the spring. The great pull of the large tracts of tillage in America and Australia is that they need not go to the expense of manuring; fallowing in the winter is quite sufficient.

756**Labour.**

Labour is fairly right about me. I do not require so much as a tillage farmer. I need it for herding, doing up fences, &c., and making hay.

Cottage Accommodation. Education.

More cottages have been built than there is demand for; this has increased the rates.

The instructors from the Agricultural Board are not making any progress with the farmers in my neighbourhood.

Local Rates.

Local rates have gone up since the County Council has come into existence.

Railway Rates.

There has been no change in railway rates for the last 10 years, but a proposed railway from Drogheda to Mullingar will be of great benefit to the country.

Co-operation.

There is a Co-operative Society about 4 miles from Kilnessen Station, 20 miles from me; none of the people round me are members of that society.

Duties.

There is very little grain grown in West Meath, and it does not pay to grow it. A small duty would make them till, and 2s. a quarter would have a good deal of effect, especially with the small farmers. Nearly all are men with about 10 to 50 acres, and they do most of the tillage in West Meath; but if corn was a good price the larger farmers would go in for it. These people grow potatoes and oats principally for horses, none for feeding purposes; but they get a very small price. I should recommend a small duty on live meat and

on flour, letting in the dead and frozen meat. People that do not buy our meat would buy the frozen meat. Frozen meat is not being sold as Irish; it would soon be found out. In Dublin the frozen meat does not get in in place of it; anyone eating good Irish meat would soon know the difference. I favour a duty on all feeding stuffs, that would enable farmers to grow grain for feeding cattle and sheep, and with increased tillage would make more demand for labour and would start local milling again.

WITNESS No. 143.

MR. ELLIOTT GRAHAM ARMSTRONG

(Farmer, Land Agent and Grazier, Mount Pleasant Avenue, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

I am a land agent and grazier, producing meat and wool. I farm 1,500 acres for myself, and 2,700 for landlords.

Profits fell steadily from 1879 to 1894, when they rose again and have since been steadily falling. The change in the condition of agriculture is caused by foreign imports of meat, butter, bacon, cheese, wheat and flour, and by the mills being idle. America, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, &c., are sending meat into this country at a price we cannot produce at. All big graziers in Meath, Kildare and Westmeath are working at a loss. Store stock and sheep were very cheap in 1892 and 1893, they rose in 1893 and 1894, and made fair profits, and since then profits have been very small, owing to the imports of foreign meat.

State of
Agriculture.

My farming business is grazing cattle. The proportion of grass land mown for hay varies. In West Ireland we use much land for sheep only in summer, and get high grass to feed the cattle on in winter. I mow 200 acres out of 1,500. I keep more cattle in winter than in the summer. We get hardly any frost and snow, and should be better off with a little more. I buy young stock and calves, and rear nothing except sheep. We buy at 2½ years old in autumn for grazing out in winter, the older we get them the better, as they must be a certain age to stand the weather. On some land young cattle would not fare well. In buying cattle it is very necessary to know the land they come off and the land they are going to. Much of our trade is selling forward cattle in March and April, to be sold and grazed during the summer. We feed them on grass and hay through the winter, and sell those in best condition in April at £14 to £17. The others are fattened during the summer, running light on the land, so as to leave a large stock of grass for the coming winter. These half-fattened cattle are killed in August, September or October. We give cattle cake as well as hay. Last winter I had 150 acres in Westmeath, on which I thought the grass would carry 60 cattle through the winter without hay. They got into very good condition until 1st March, when they began to slacken, and I gave them 3 lbs. of cake, decorticated and undecorticated equally mixed, which cost me 1s. a week per bullock. Hay costs £2 a ton, and the mixed cake cost £6. It was the cheapest possible feeding for the condition the cattle were in. It did not bring them into good condition, but it kept them from falling away in spring, when our cattle mostly deteriorate. The scientific way to feed a calf is with skimmed milk, supplemented by cake or linseed meal; in Limerick and Tipperary the calf gets milk alone, and he makes a very bad calf. No young animal can be reared unless it is well fed in the first few months, and unless the mother is well fed while bearing it. The breed of cattle has improved the last 20 years in Galway and Mayo, but not in Roscommon. We buy every autumn 1,500 head of cattle, bullocks, not heifers, and keep 600 ewes and 1,000 lambs. I keep white Galway ewes and cross them with a thoroughbred "Shrop." rear the lambs and keep them through winter, and shear and sell them the next spring. We sell wool to local buyers, who buy on commission for Bradford houses. On June 1st, 1905, it was worth 1s., it rose during June to 1s. 1d., and is now worth 10½d. washed. I sold 1,700 fleeces in which there was some lamb wool. Some were white Galway ewes, some were half Shrop. If the whole was pure Shrop it would be worth now 1s. 1½d. The price in my neighbourhood is a trifle more than that quoted for Kent fleece. Lincoln wool is not so high. It does not pay to till in Ireland unless you make your produce walk to market. It would pay to till more oats, barley, &c., for cattle and sheep raising. Our people grow pigs, but not as many as they might. There is a pig fair in Ballinasloe. Nearly every country town in Ireland has a cattle fair 3 to 5 times a year, with a pig fair 2 days before. Imported live cattle should be killed at the port, store cattle from Canada would be fatal to Ireland. You could not keep out disease with the extensive frontier between Canada and America. Canadian cattle are not quite free from diseases such as scabies, "big-jaw" and others. The only cattle disease we have is "red water." There is an enormous field for producing eggs, butter, &c., by our farmers. In Kilkenny, Tipperary and Galway they are waking up to this fact.

Canadian Stores.

Dairy Produce.

We grow no fruit; the climate and soil are not good enough, and the people would not take any trouble about it; every apple would be stolen.

Fruit.

The agricultural labourer in Ireland is not much good; he will not work, and as long as he has relations, friends and neighbours to back him he is very careless, but away from Ireland and alone he is a very good man, but he is underfed in Ireland, and not fit for labour. Both the quality and supply of labour have fallen off; the men are not so strong, and do not do as much work as they did. Four or five families living on my land supply me, but casual labour for haymaking, &c., in Galway is very hard to get, of a bad quality, and very expensive; thus boys who do not want to work ask 2s. and 2s. 6d. a day. Wages in Roscommon for permanent men are 8s. a week, with a house, fuel, an acre of ground, and the feeding of pigs, geese and ducks, besides many other perquisites, equal to 14s. wages in all. Shepherds or stockmen are expensive. My head man has a house, 2 or 3 acres of ground, and the feeding of 4 cows and their calves, and £15 a year in cash, it would pay me better to give him £1 a week wages. Some of my trained

Labour and Wages.

- 761 **Labour and Wages** —continued. men in Roscommon have been born under me, and are good, useful men. The bulk of the land in West Ireland is held by small tenants, holding 5 to 15 acres, and they and their sons supply the labour. When Indian meal came into the country the people ate it largely, and continued using it for 14 years. Now they use a worse food—i.e., American flour.
- Education.** Agricultural education has hardly begun to shew any results yet. They are teaching and lecturing, but it is no practical use; land held by small farmers is still very badly managed. The Department of Agriculture assists farmers in a practical way, and issues leaflets, but they are of no use to me; that sort of farming does not apply in the rough country of Galway.
- Co-operation.** We have a co-operative society for eggs in Chascragh village. They are doing well, and helping the people. We have a fair at Ballinasloe, but there is no market organisation. The cattle come in, are sold, and sent away anyhow.
- Annual Outgoings.** Rent, 17s.; labour, 5s.; feeding stuffs, 2s. 6d.; manure, 1s.; machinery, 1s.; rates and taxes, 1s.; all per acre. Total, 27s. 6d.
- Railway Rates.** Railway rates are too high, through bad and expensive management, want of system and punctuality, too many Directors, and the bad quality of the employees. I am interested in the Midland and Great Western, which could earn more money by reducing its prohibitive rates. More cattle, sheep, &c., would be produced and carried if rates were lower. For many years I bought cattle in the West of Ireland for Meath and Kildare graziers, and I could walk the cattle up to Meath and Kildare for half the railway rate. It rather knocked them about, but I sent 2,000 to 3,000 a year up to Kildare, &c. I buy many cattle in Tipperary, and have a farm within 6 miles, to which I bring them. They stay there for 7 to 14 days, and reach another farm at Kilreecle and Ballinasloe, and eventually get to Roscommon. With a good herdsman they can be walked without deterioration in fair weather.
- 762 **Duties.** A tax on wheat and all imports would be of use to Ireland. More wheat would be grown in Great Britain; home-grown wheat and imported would be ground into flour at home; there would be more employment, more offals, and cheaper, as cattle food to farmers; flour and bread of better quality. American flour should not be brought into the country. Cold storage, &c., has enabled foreign meat to be imported at prices we cannot meet. Food imports are a necessity for England, but a small tax would not raise the price to the consumer, and would enable the farmer to live. Imported dead meat should be clearly marked. Foreign meat is sold as English; "Best English Home Killed Meat" is American beef, New Zealand mutton and meat from all parts of the world. When American meat rises to 5d. the importers' agents buy Irish cattle, kill them, and sell them as American meat in Dublin, and when Irish meat rises foreign stuff is sold as "home killed" everywhere. Let foreign meat be sold but marked as such. I recommend a tax on butter, cheese, bacon, eggs, &c.
- Marking Meat.**

763

WITNESS No. 144.

MR. JAMES GEORGE BATEMAN

(Farmer and Grazier, Deelis, Camp, Co. Kerry).

I am prepared to speak upon potatoes, grain and root crops, cattle, sheep and farming generally. I farm about 400 acres, of which 300 is mountain land valuable for sheep. I grow potatoes, oats, mangolds and turnips, and wheat, chiefly for the straw.

State of Agriculture.

The agricultural industry in my district is declining. Labour is scarce and dear, so farmers till but little, grass being preferable for cattle. The profits have shown a downward tendency for the past 7 years, cattle particularly so this year. I grow from 200 to 250 sheep, and am getting a good price for wool—from 7½d. upwards. The wool is of coarse quality. I only grow fruit and vegetables for myself. I could have a market for such produce, and intend to start growing. I got apple trees from the Board of Agriculture at 1s. each, and have planted these on the arable land. Most of the land is rented at too high a rate and with increasing rates farming is not profitable. I feed pigs and occasionally cure my own bacon, the foreign meat being very often unsound. Foreign pigs are fed on the offal of freezing works, boiling down factories, and such places. Ours being differently fed the bacon is of a superior quality. The bacon I buy is Danish or American (which is just as bad). I pay 7d. to 8d. per lb. The decline in agriculture has been due principally to foreign competition.

764

Labour and Wages.

The quality of labour is not as good as it used to be. The best men emigrate and those who remain require training, which is a hardship on farmers. We give our labourers their food. Wages have gone up recently from £12 to £18 a year, and weekly wages have risen from 5s. to 10s.

Cottage Accommodation.

Labourers are well provided with cottage accommodation, and in the district generally there are plenty of cottages.

Creameries.

Dairy factories have been established and are most beneficial, as the butter made is of good quality. If butter made by farmers could be similarly handled, I have no doubt we could hold our own with the foreigner. No more pigs are fed since creameries were started.

Local Rates.

Local rates have been constantly and steadily increasing during the past 10 years. I think they could be more judiciously applied than in increasing officials' salaries.

Foreign Competition.

I am acquainted with the system of cultivation in foreign countries. They have the advantages of better land, a good climate, splendid facilities, and little rent or taxes. I am speaking of New Zealand. Their methods of cultivation are much more up to date. How can we compete with their ploughing engine, 3 and 4 horse plough, seeding machine, and hay-loading machine? They have to pay more for labour, but it is harder for a farmer to pay £18 here than £70 there. I returned from New Zealand to take up the home farm, as I thought I could do better in Ireland, and I can with amended Land Laws and a tax on foreign imports.

I estimate the annual outgoings on my farm at about 8s. per acre.

Annual Outgoings. 785
Duties.

I have considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, and am entirely in agreement with them. Tax foreign produce, and agriculture improves. I am opposed to the re-admission of foreign store cattle, for it would ruin the Irish farmer who depends largely on cattle for his living. A tax on foreign imported agricultural produce would not injuriously affect the labourer. By the imposition of duties the farmer becomes wealthy, employs more labour, grows more wheat, flour would be as low, and whatever the advantages of taxation might be, the agricultural labourer would share in them. I suggest a further increase of tax on frozen meat. I have a strong conviction that more wheat would be grown should the price increase.

Effect on Labour.

WITNESS No. 145.

MR. WILLIAM TAVERNER BLASTOCK

(Farmer, Land Agent and Valuer, Rowley Fields, near Leicester, former President of and representing the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture).

I have kept a dairy of 30 cows, made cheese, reared cattle and grown corn. I have occupied my 250 acre farm for 20 years. I also occupy much good grazing land, feeding 300 bullocks. I have a large practice as agricultural valuer in 5 counties. I am a Member of the Midland Counties Tenant Right Valuers' Association. I farm 500 to 600 acres, 130 arable, the remainder good grazing land. In 1896 the Royal Agricultural Society awarded me a prize for the second best cultivated and managed farm in England.

786

The general condition of agriculture is as bad as can be. Corn is grown at a loss. Last season was a bad grazing season. Stores were very dear in spring, summer was bad, and in autumn large imports of cattle made prices so low that profits have become losses. Unless something is done many farmers will fail, probably 50 % are bankrupt now. Men who took farms with plenty of capital, have lost it all. This applies equally to all the counties my business covers. Farming has been least remunerative in corn growing, because expenses have been very heavy and foreign competition very severe, but all agricultural profits have greatly diminished. A neighbouring farmer has been dairying many years. With an average of 100 cows in 1880 he made £4,364 out of milk and in 1900 with more cows he made £2,630, because milk farming becoming much more common prices have fallen. Rents have fallen largely. My rent, in 1885 63s. per acre, is now 32s.

State of
Agriculture.

We ought to get Canadian sheep and cattle into this country again. I shipped the first cargo of Canadian store sheep ever brought to England. They could be brought here cheaper than we can produce them, and would increase the supply for fattening, &c. It would be very serious if they introduced disease, but I imported because we had lost many home sheep by liver fluke, and I found no disease in these.

Canadian Stores.

Labour is superabundant, particularly summer and autumn, 20 or 30 applications sometimes coming on one day for work which I could not give. Farmers are employing much less labour, having seeded down the land. The quality of labour has deteriorated during late years. We now have to use old men and unskilled labourers, the young men have gone into towns, where they get more money, but want of employment is the chief cause of this exodus. If I want young men for hedge-cutting, draining, or sheep shearing, I cannot get them. My old men, now dying off, could do hedge-cutting, draining, stacking, or thatching. Now only special men can. Formerly we had no difficulty in getting good dairymaids. I gave up dairying because I could not get dairymaids to make the cheese sufficiently good.

Labour.

787

Changes in the condition of agriculture commenced to be felt in 1890. The importation of foods, meat, etc., was the principal cause, next the undue preference to the foreigner by the railways. The effect was to lower prices greatly.

Causes of Change.

We are hit all round by railway rates. Wheat and cheese can be delivered from America to London at much less than from Leicester. This is very serious. Foreign cattle can be brought *via* Newcastle to London for much less than English cattle from Newcastle, and very much less than from Leicester. In Leicestershire our cattle come from Ireland, Wales, Herefordshire, at a cost of 21s. to 23s. This excessive rate tells very much against us. A live animal is brought across the Atlantic to Deptford for less money than from Leicester. A Glasgow silk merchant can save expense by sending by water to London, *via* a French port. We have an excellent market at Leicester. The canal to Leicester was formerly much used and now very little. We could get coal, cakes, &c., very much cheaper by water.

Railway and
Shipping Rates.

788

We have a Dairy Institute at Kingston to extend dairy education, but it is not greatly used because the state of agriculture does not tempt young people to use these institutions.

Education.

Cottage accommodation is plentiful, but there are many cottages empty which would soon be filled if more employment were found.

Cottage
Accommodation.

American and Canadian rents are much lower, and the workers principally own the land. They get virgin soil, and great advantages in machinery, they work with 2 or 3 horses and a double furrow plough, and do as much work as 4 horses and 2 men here. The land takes less doing. The excessive frosts there pulverise the land so that it works much more mouldy and lighter, and its average quality is better than our own. Canadian corn cultivation requires considerably less labour than English owing to better methods, and the advantages of having open fields, &c. The British farmer can buy the same machinery, but in our 4 or 5 acre fields we could not use these double ploughs, and machinery for collecting sheaves and facilitating setting up of corn, as on the immense tracts of land in Canada. Our small farms are more expensive to work. Colonial farmers pay more for labour. Colonial straw is only of value as manure, and when cutting corn, instead of taking it at the bottom for the straw, they cut it near the top, consequently, it does not require half the labour to harvest, nor as much threshing. The straw is left on the ground as manure, doing away with the labour of

Foreign and
Colonial Methods.

**769 Foreign and Colonial Methods—
continued.**

removing and consuming the straw in the yards and carting the manure to the land. Straw is worth £1 or £2 an acre to the British farmer, but he first has to spend that amount on it. In Australia the State owns the railways, which often carry produce to seaports at a loss. The British farmer is as skilled and able as any in the world. He only wants the same opportunities.

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes have increased from £45 8s. in 1886 to £55 18s. in 1896. Mine is not a fair test because of changes in the borough boundaries, which have made my rates heavier. Rates equal 2s. per quarter on our corn. Rates were reduced half under the Agricultural Rates Act. The landlord got no part of the relief.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent 40s. Labour on grass land 10s., on arable 30s. Feeding stuff 20s., implements 7s. Rates and taxes ½ths.

Duties.

Duties on agricultural produce will assist farmers if all imported corn is taxed. Flour should be taxed 10 %. The proposed small duty would not hurt the labourer, and a larger duty placed on corn would greatly benefit him by giving him full work and probably higher wages, besides getting food stuffs for his pig much cheaper. In my district every labourer having a cottage keeps pigs, and lives mostly on bacon in summer, often killing two or more pigs a year. He grows vegetables, potatoes, &c., and a little barley, wheat, &c., for pig food. With a tax on flour he would send this wheat, &c., to the miller to be ground, getting flour and offal.

770 Preference.

I would give a preference to the Colonies—by making the tax on foreign produce heavier. I favour putting the Colonial on the same footing as the British farmer. In Canada, &c., they do not pay rates and taxes, and I favour taxing their corn 2s.

WITNESS No. 146.

CAPTAIN JAMES T. BUTLER

(Farmer and Grazier, Priestown House, Co. Meath).

My farm, 710 acres, consists of grazing and, to a small extent, tillage.

**State of
Agriculture.**

Grazing is very varying, but lately we have had more bad years than good. It depends mainly on the price of stores, and the weather which greatly affects the welfare of cattle. The price of beef is not so varying as that of stores. Our profits partly depend on how we buy cattle. I have been managing this farm for 16 years, at first the industry was better, it has become worse through the supply of stores and imports of meat, which greatly reduce the price of beef. The latter varies at different times of the year, and a good year varies from a bad year by about 6s. per cwt. We have an insufficient supply of store cattle. We have to supply England and ourselves—England does not breed so much as we do. England has many calves to sell at 5s. to £1. No calves can be imported from England, but pedigree cattle can come. Calves could be collected in England by jobbers who would make a business of it, and sent in a truck, many together, a small proportion would die, but some would arrive. From Liverpool they would arrive in 10 or 12 hours. If England sent us back calves which we could rear it would be a great help to us, but the Irish Board of Agriculture thinks we might import disease from England. (Anthrax is said to be prevalent in England; we have few cases in Ireland.) A recent deputation to the Lord Lieutenant, consisting of members of the cattle traders' association, etc., got no encouragement. Importing Canadian cattle would be no remedy, it would do me good as a feeder, but would injure the interests of the country; it would lower the value of all existing stock 20 %. Profits have diminished very much mainly through the fall in prices to which imports of cattle and meat contribute. In my district the land is unsuitable for tillage. If we can harvest early we have good crops, especially oats. In an ordinary year oats grow luxuriantly and high. At any price corn-growing is mere chance on our heavy soil and with our damp climate. The larger quantity of produce we can turn out the better. Near Dublin we are in the best position for selling stock. I can always sell good oats and hay at a high price to hunting men. I give my hunters old meadow hay. I was recently bid £4 for new meadow hay. I got £4 10s. last year. Ireland is not raising so many good horses, there is no encouragement to breed horses for the army. Many high-priced hunters get wrong in the wind and develop other complaints. Many of our mares go away, the best to England. Maize in the poorer districts of Ireland feeds the people particularly in bad seasons and when potatoes fail, and in the richer districts the pigs eat maize. It is not eaten so much as it was and is not good food.

771

772

Labour.

Labour presents no difficulty if there are houses for the men. They do not work so hard as formerly.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates are too high, and we are fighting the companies as much as we can. We recognise the difficulties of the principal company concerned, but if rates were lower there might be a slight increase in traffic.

Co-operation.

The co-operative system of buying and selling manure and machinery has greatly improved. Sir Horace Plunkett's methods have met with the greatest success.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

Necessary cottages have been provided by local authorities for those who lived in bad and unsanitary houses. But now they are building many for men who should not be in them, so we are not getting the advantage of the Act. We are quite willing to pay the slight increase in rates to provide proper cottages for the proper class.

Local Rates.

The poor rate in 1901 on 533 acres was £34 8s. 4d.; in 1902 it was £48 3s. 8d.; in 1903 £46 9s. 2½d., and in 1904 £40 14s. 4d.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent £1, labour 9s., feeding stuffs 1s. 5d., manure 1s. 6d., rates and taxes 2s. 4d.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would tend to raise prices of feeding stuff, &c., and we should grow more ourselves and give extra employment, they would not hurt any of us much and would do good, specially a tax on cattle and meat. Dead meat affects us to a great extent but imported cattle compete directly with ours and equal our best beef. The tax would raise the price of beef probably 15s. per beast and increase our profits 5s. or 7s. 6d. an acre. An Irish labourer uses much tea, sugar, bacon, and meal ground from home-grown wheat. Under a tariff the condition of the labourer would be improved. The 5 % tax on wheat would be of advantage to farmers, but a much higher tax on flour would equally answer the purpose. Home and foreign corn could be ground and sold here and give employment, while imported flour would pay duties. Maize should be admitted free as we use it for feeding. It would not pay to break up our land, whatever the duties amounted to—our land is too heavy, and we should make more money grazing than tilling.

Duties.

773

Under a preferential arrangement with the Colonies a slight increase in tillage would result if Canadian stores are still excluded. If the slight increase gave employment to only 1 extra man per 500 acres, it would be a large gain to Ireland with its decreasing population.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 147.

774

MR. RICHARD W. COOPER

(Farmer and Cattle Dealer, Ballinrea, Douglas, Co. Cork).

I buy heifers and dry cows, get them in calf, and sell them, fattening the heifers that do not calve. I supply the dairyman, and farm 600 acres.

Agricultural industry is very depressed, and as the price of beef is generally falling you cannot sell cattle at much profit. Beef this spring was 56s., now it is 50s., and selling 5 ore bullocks bought in April would be unprofitable. The general industry of the county is dairy farming and store cattle. Cork is a very poor county for fattening. They get the calves from dairymen and raise and sell them as stores to Limerick, Meath and England. Limerick has lately been unable to rear calves. Calves are generally kept for a year and then sold by small farmers for about £6. This year I bought 80 cows 4 to 6 years at 7 guineas each, last year I paid £7 15s. 6d. including 5s. to 5s. 6d. a head commission to the man who bought for me. Very often we get unsound cows, and their calves are destroyed. Some cows will not calve while they have a drop of milk, and some may be perfectly sound one year and all wrong the next, but I get them before they are dry, and a careful man dries them. They pay well if calving after a year, and I get from £8 10s. to £17 10s. I buy from October to December, and if I do not like the look of a cow I do not let her go to dairy but keep and fatten her. If in calf she must take her chance. I give her grass, hay and a few mangolds. I buy heifers at £6 10s. in summer to run with the bull from November on. I sell them at £11 to £17 with the calf. I keep a Hereford bull, and contract to supply calves by him at 30s. each. I sell the cow and risk the calf. I do not dairy except for ourselves. There is much tillage in Co. Cork. My land grows a ton of hay per acre. It is not good enough to grow malting-barley, and foreign is cheaper if not required for malting. With good land barley pays very well, you get 15s. to 17s. a barrel for malting-barley, but few farmers or none depend entirely on barley. Profits of late years have decreased because of foreign competition and the consequent fall in prices. Some people in Cork grow fruit largely, and do extremely well because they can get labour from the city. One man has 8 acres of raspberries and is putting all his farm under fruit satisfactorily, as he can get any quantity of women and children. He employs 100 at 1s. a day. I could not do it because I could not get pickers. There were many apple orchards round Cork formerly. My farm 100 years ago was all orchard, but American apples have killed that industry.

State of
Agriculture.

775

The importation of stores would ruin all our small farmers because their chief industry is raising calves which they buy or breed and their wives and daughters bring up. Our small farmers farm from 4 to 200 acres, mostly 25 to 50. The smaller the farm the more ruinous these importations would be. My land pays about 4s. an acre taxes, the foreigner comes in for nothing. I compete on 4s. per ton worse terms.

Imported Stores

Labour is very scarce because we cannot pay as much as formerly, and labourers have gone into the towns and abroad. Now we can get few extra hands at any price, the population is half gone, we cannot get female labour because girls go to America, formerly we could get any quantity of girls at 9d. to 1s. a day to thin turnips, now it is done as overtime by men permanently living with me. Irish labourers work splendidly, they live chiefly on bread and tea. They get separated-milk from me, 2 gallons 1d. When they have had a good week in thinning turnips I give them some butter (my wife makes a little butter, cream cheese, &c.). I gave them overtime this year making a tennis ground. They worked from 6 to 9 at 3d. an hour. A fortnight later I gave them some mangolds to do at 3d. a drill, and they earned 1s. a night, but were not keen for further overtime. They spend their money on clothes for the family and other necessities of life, and tobacco. They look on children as a source of wealth, and have as many as they can. Some go to the navy and send money home. The son of one of my labourers went as a stoker and came back with £27; the family were drunk for a fortnight. Labourers keep a sheep or two. Small farmers who cannot afford much wages weekly encourage this. My labourers' sheep run with my ram, and they sell their lambs. One labourer made 50s. profit on one sheep this year. I allow them as much garden as they can manure, and the better the manure the better their crop of potatoes; they keep pigs for the manure, and feed them chiefly on Indian corn. They never kill a pig, there would be too much waste. They generally take the pig to Cork market, guessing its weight and what they ought to get for it. If not satisfied with the price offered they take it to a bacon-curing establishment. They have bacon occasionally, and on Friday a little dried fish. I give them cabbage plants for their gardens. They never eat cheese. They get buttermilk occasionally to make a cake when they have any flour. They do not use margarine or dripping.

Labour.

776

- 777 **Wages.** Wages have risen. Labourers receive 9s. weekly in cash besides a cottage, grass for a sheep or two, a potato garden and coal.
- Market Organisation.** If I sell a beast in Cork I must first pay 2½d. for using the market. I often sell to a blocker, who sells to a dealer, who ships it to be sold by auction in Bristol. A blocker is one who sells to a dealer or buys for him on commission. Very often small farmers who do not know the blocker get left with their beast if the dealer does not take it. The blocker himself has not sufficient money to pay for the beast. If I do not know him I make him give me earnest, but the little farmer if offered a tempting price is apt to leave his cattle with the blocker. They are a great nuisance and are numerous in Cork. I never sell to them if I can help it, but the advantage of the system is that they tell you the price of cattle, &c. If you sell to a blocker he cuts or marks your cattle, but it is not a legal transfer unless he gives you a penny; the penny is generally forgotten.
- Education.** The Board of Agriculture sends out pamphlets to farmers who seldom read them, the ordinary small farmer is very ignorant, especially in Cork, he never reads anything, some of them cannot. Professors give lectures but people do not attend them. They will farm like their fathers or die in the attempt. They will not take advice.
- Cottage Accommodation.** Every farmer supplies his men with good cottages. There are many cottages built by our local authorities, who charge 1s. a week rent. They have a little land with them, and have been given chiefly to government employes at Haulbowline Docks. No agricultural labourers round me have any of these cottages.
- 778 **American Methods.** I have farmed in Missouri (U.S.A.), where a farmer has only to brand a calf when it is weaned, and put it out on government or railway land. Once a year he looks up his books, and with other farmers rounds the cattle up, puts them into waggons at the railway station and sends them to Chicago. In the stockyards on arrival the beasts are valued and the farmer gets his cheque by return post.
- Local Rates.** £79 15s. 11d. rates, £27 4s. 8d. tithe (I pay 1s. an acre tithe for a non-existent church), £31 11s. 9d. income tax (I appeal against the latter as I do not make the income).
- Annual Outgoings.** Rent nil, labour 10s., feeding stuffs 1s. 6d., manure 1s. 6d., machinery, &c., 1s., rates and taxes 3s. 4d. per acre.
- Duties.** Either take off some taxes and give me a chance of competing on equal terms, or tax everything and let those pay who want to buy. Protection would be the fairest system. Those who use my market should pay for it. It is like a shopkeeper being obliged to sell goods for those who do not help to pay his shop rent. The foreigner would have to pay a good deal. It might lighten my taxes, and would increase my profits, because prices would go up. A tax on beef would make no difference to the labourer. He does not know whether beef is 40s. or 60s. Beef in April was 56s., it is now 50s.—a fall of 6s. or over ½d. per lb., but it does not affect retail prices. A tax would make little difference to the artizan, but great difference to the farmer. The dearer mutton is, the more benefit labourers would get. If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were carried out we should have a better chance of employing labour and we should want more, because if beef went up 10s. or 12s. a cwt. we should be able to stall feed, which we cannot now do at a profit, most farmers are satisfied to get the manure for nothing. An ordinary labouring family consumes ¼ lb. of tea per head per week, they would derive considerable benefit if tea and tobacco duties were reduced.
- 779

WITNESS No. 148.

MR. GEORGE A. ELLIOTT
(Farmer and Grazier, Hulcott, Aylesbury).

I farm at Hulcott in the Vale of Aylesbury. All grazing now. I have about 316 acres; about 60 of it was laid down to grass some 20 years ago as it was heavy ploughing. I breed very little. I buy in the market at 2½ years old, and I feed them all.

- 780 **State of Agriculture.** My experience in recent years with regard to grazing has been very bad indeed. There has been a great loss, in the last 2 or 3 years especially, both in beef and mutton, but beef principally. Twenty years ago 60 acres of my land was heavy arable, and we used to milk 60 cows, but the men went on strike and my father sold some of the cows, and we diminished them gradually; now I do not milk at all. A good many farmers in the district have laid down a portion of their land because the corn was not worth growing. It is impossible at present prices to grow corn profitably.

This change in the agricultural cropping, the conversion of arable into pasture, took place about 1878 or 1879. That was when I had the first remission of rent.

- Labour.** We have a great difficulty in obtaining good labour. The young men have been away now for some years, and those that you can get to come back do not know their duties at all. Practically a young man must be bred on the land to understand farming; must be apprenticed as to anything else. The demand for labour has considerably decreased because the farmers have not the money to pay with, and labour has to find employment elsewhere. The supply in my district does not exceed the demand. The cause of the agricultural labourers, the younger men particularly, leaving the country to go to the towns is not owing to the inability of the farmer to pay them what may be called a living wage, but because they receive 4s. or 5s. per week more in the towns. They are certainly not better off, but you cannot make them see that. If they can get in the building trade they seem to prefer to stop there. There are more of them together, or some such reason.

The rate of wages has not diminished in the last 20 years, it is about 16s. per week now, and the perquisites come to about £3 a year. **Wages.**

781

We have a sufficiency of very excellent cottages at 2s. a week. That certainly cannot be said to be a reason for the people going from the country to the towns. **Cottages.**

The present form of education is very rotten. When they used to pay their pence, the agricultural labourers were better men than they are now, they were better educated for what they had to do. The increased intelligence of working men goes against them, for it is not practical. They may have a little more education in their head which does them no good whatever, and, as for knowing anything about sheep and so on, if they stayed at school until they were 16 they would not do it. They practically will not do what you tell them. For anyone to know about sheep and stock I prefer him to come to the yard at 12 or 13 and grow up amongst them, but they prefer the clean work and the town work. **Education.**

The Education Act has worked very badly against me. It has cost me about £15 a year. Previously I paid nothing. It is simply taking it off the landlord and clergyman and putting it on the tenant in my case. **Rates.**

I got about £10 advantage over the Agricultural Rating Act. The landlord did not take advantage of it for I have one of the best of landlords, and I certainly desire to see that Act renewed. With the present state of agriculture the rates should be taken off the land altogether. **Agricultural Rates Act.**

I use the railway but very little. I sell my beef locally, and principally consume what I produce. I am aware that it costs $\frac{2}{3}$ as much to send from Aylesbury as it does from New York. **Railway Rates.**

782

As to co-operation amongst farmers in my district in buying and selling, you cannot get them to, I am sorry to say. **Co-operation.**

I am obliged to employ the auctioneer for sales, the butchers will not come home to you now. Out of about 100 beasts I sold one at home. The auction has now become a recognised practice and it is a very good market for an auction. But auction is decidedly not as good as the old method, and I would greatly prefer to back my own judgment. **Cattle Auctions.**

If a tax is put on foreign goods, and that will increase the price of ours, I certainly think I should benefit, but not unless it increases the price of my produce, and it most decidedly would if big enough. I am afraid a 2s. tax on corn would only make a very slight difference, but a tax of about $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. on meat certainly must mean a benefit, but I am not prepared to say to what extent. **Duties.**

I do not quite know how the labourers would obtain a share of that benefit, for with farming as it is now, I should say decidedly their wages could not rise for some considerable time. We consider that the labourers have had decidedly the best of it, and that they are having the best of it now, and I cannot see how you can turn the losses of years into such a profit that we should give the labourer more money. I do not think we should for some years. The benefit which we may get must first of all make good our present losses, but we should be quite willing if we were reaping an advantage to pay our labourers more. If any scheme could be devised whereby one could farm profitably, then the natural demand for labour would bring about a rise in price, and, if the demand was great, the farmer would be in a position to pay his labourers more, and that might keep them from going into the towns. **Effect on Labour.**

783

WITNESS No. 149.

MR. EDWARD FENNESSY

(Farmer and Grazier, Kilkenny).

I farm 300 statute acres, all grass. Mine is a capital tillage district, but there is much less than formerly; only small farmers till now, the larger farmers have been obliged to give it up and devote their attention to grazing almost entirely, as I have for the last 7 years. It is very much easier to keep the ground in a light condition, and clean when it is in good grass than with tillage. Agriculture is drifting fast into grazing, and its position is not flourishing. The land in my county only gets poorer when the farmers get reduced in circumstances, but it will produce as good crops now as it used to 10 years ago if looked after properly. If the farmer is over rented it is a very ruinous thing for the country, because he continues paying his rent by reducing the productiveness of his farm. If he finds he cannot succeed he commences ploughing up all his good land, and exhausting it, and he will ultimately leave it in a very impoverished state; but that only occurs to the men that are going downhill. I strongly advocate the tillage of small holdings, but it would not pay me personally. A farm labourer on 12s. or 14s. per week gives only his unwilling labour for it, but if he worked on a small farm of his own he would work with a will, and have the labour of his wife and children also. The small farmer can produce corn infinitely cheaper than the large one. He cultivates his land, with the aid of his family, and does not employ labour. The tillage he gets practically for nothing because he does it with 2 to 3 year old horses, which he must feed, and is at the same time training them. Nearly all these small farmers breed horses—Irish draught horses principally, not Clydesdales. They make it pay, partly by the use of them in the way described. They also make money as labourers, road contractors, carters, &c. They do not live entirely out of their farm, though they could make a decent living on a small farm of 20 or 30 acres (Irish). The average size of the small farms round about is 30, 40 or 50 acres, but there are not many of them; some have only 10 to 15 acres and less. These are the ones that would supplement their farms by road contracts, carting timber, stones, &c.; so small a farm is not sufficient employment for them, they assist their neighbours, cut their hay and corn, &c., and there is plenty of demand for their spare labour. The country loses about £5 per annum on every acre of land out of cultivation for this reason: An acre of very poor land in grass is worth 10s., under tillage its crop would be worth £5 10s.; of really good land, if the grass, instead of meadowing, is reckoned at £3 or £4 an acre, the crop under tillage would be worth £8 or £9. Though the farmer might lose by the

State of Agriculture.

784

Small Holdings.

785 Small Holdings
—continued.

crop the land would have produced it, and the cost would have been left in the country. Everything in a tillage country depends on populating it. When the taxes have to be paid by the few instead of the many everything is ruined. If we could get Canadian store cattle in at £3 a head less in the autumn I should not return to tillage because my grass would be more use to me if I could get £3 a head more for feeding them. For the last 10 or 15 years I have not tilled at all. I bought all my turnips, hay and straw stall feeding 40 to 60 head of cattle in a year without growing a single turnip. Turnips at 4½d. or 5d. a cwt., delivered at my yard, are much cheaper than I could grow them. There is no hay imported into Ireland and I am buying good first and second crop hay now at 35s. a ton, put into my hay barn. It would not pay me to grow, save, and deliver it at the money, but the seller probably has cheaper land and does not count his labour. I can get my meadows cut cheaper than I can do it myself by hiring a small farmer in the neighbourhood. I have put up large sheds and do not tie up my cattle. They get both meal and cake in concrete troughs in one shed, and hay in the other; this is cheaper than stall feeding. One man feeds 60 or 70 head of cattle. A further advantage is that the litter put under the cattle in winter remains there the whole summer, and is fit to put out in autumn without any expense. Last season cattle paid badly, the two previous years paid much better. Kilkenny is a fairly good district for poultry, there is a large fowl market and great interest is taken; a poultry Inspector goes round and the trade is improving, but it is only a trade for the small farmer. The holdings of from 10 to 15 acres are all tillage. There is very little fruit or vegetable growing for market; it is not successful now, though it used to be. Kilkenny was once famous for its fruit and orchards. The orchards are all dying out, and fruit-growing has been discontinued. They are trying to restore it but dishonesty is the chief obstacle; the fruit is stolen. I myself have cut down 2 orchards owing to this. I grow myself as fine pears, and apples, and cherries, and plums as there are in the world. A part of the regular market at Kilkenny is devoted to fruit and vegetables. It is not the 10-acre men that grow fruit at all, but rather the orchard attached to the 30 or 40 acre farm. There is no such thing in the county as a man of 10 acres growing exclusively fruit as in the north of Ireland. The fall in prices and rise in labour are the chief causes of the decline in agriculture. Emigration and intemperance have also contributed very largely. Profits have diminished in recent years on corn and roots.

Cattle Feeding.**Poultry.****Fruit.****786****Labour.**

Labour is very difficult to obtain; the quality is nothing like as good as it used to be. The men will not work. The change of diet of the working people has much to do with the present inferior labour. Formerly the diet was chiefly potatoes, whole-meal bread, oatmeal bread and porridge. Now they live almost exclusively on tea and white bread, made from very inferior flour, and their physique has entirely changed. This change began 20 years ago or more. The old diet included milk, now they have very little. We have 6 to 8 labourers' clubs in Kilkenny which are a curse and are the cause of the increase of intemperance.

Wages.

I give 12s. a week and a house, and while the prices of produce have fallen the cost of labour has risen decidedly.

787**Market Organisation.
Sale of Cattle
by Weight.**

Market organisation in my district is extremely bad; it has never been good. All cattle should be sold by live weight. The majority are in favour of having their cattle weighed and about 5 years ago, under the Weighing of Cattle Act, scales were put up, but so badly that they are never made use of. If a farmer is seen driving his cattle to the scale the dealers avoid him, they will not buy weighed cattle if they can help it. The explanation is simple; the cattle buyer is much more competent to judge the weight than the farmer who sells, and is, to my knowledge, imposed upon. It is against the buyer's interest to have the cattle weighed, and though the value of young stock depends more on quality than weight, quality can be taken into consideration with the weight. Our farmers are fully alive to the advantage of sale by weight; the men near Kilkenny send their cattle to be weighed the night before the fair, drive them home, pay tolls again next day, and bring them in pretending that they were never weighed. Probably not one in a 100 is "sold" by weight, and the cattle are so mixed that it would be impossible. If the cattle were classified, as at Smithfield, &c., it would be immensely to the farmers' advantage, because the dealers could not impose on them. There are constantly "blockers" at these fairs, who go in the morning and buy a small lot of cattle on the chance of selling them at a profit. Sometimes they leave them on the farmer's hands. Representations have been made to the Corporation, but they are not willing to act, though they could be compelled to do so under the Act of Parliament by which they established the fair. Under the Act, which gave power to collect tolls, they were to spend the money, after the loan was paid off, in improving the Fair Green, or reducing the tolls. They have done neither, but have used the surplus for improving the approaches, &c. If there were a weighbridge at two of the gates of our Fair Green and the cattle weighed on entering and a weigh ticket given, there would be no trouble or loss, and farmers would soon realise the advantage. In case of dispute the cattle could be weighed again before leaving the fair.

788**Railway Rates.**

Our railway charges are excessive, and we need a special agricultural rate. When agricultural produce is loaded by the sender, and taken from the wagons by the receiver, there ought to be a wagon-load rate of 6d. per wagon per mile. There was such a rate from Athlone to Kilkenny for potatoes, but it has been discontinued. I made application years ago for its renewal but was refused, and no reason given. Our rate from Kilkenny to Waterford for corn, and sundry goods, is about 20 to 25 % dearer than from Waterford to Clonmel, the same distance, not because the goods are carried in different quantities, but because there is water competition from Waterford to Clonmel, and none from Waterford to Kilkenny. This refers to the Great Southern and Western Railways, now amalgamated. It is very unfair that the same company should charge about 25 % more for carrying goods the same distance from the port to two stations on their line. Individual representations are of very little use.

Co-operation.

There are co-operative dairies and most of them are successful. The dairy societies handle manure, seeds, &c., as well as the milk business. The Agricultural Society in Kilkenny is very inactive in farmers' affairs. With the present demoralised labour, cultivation can be more cheaply carried on here by small farmers of 40 to 60 acres, where every one of the family works, than by larger farmers who have to hire labour. These small farmers buy implements between them, and hire them to each other, and sow, cut, and thrash corn, &c., in the most economical way.

Rent 8s. 6d., labour 5s., feeding stuffs 10s., manure 5s., machinery, tackle and horses 3s. 6d., all per acre. **Annual Outgoings.** 789

I entirely approve of the proposals. It is absolutely necessary to have a duty on corn, or it will cease to be produced. It would be a very good plan if the offal of wheat were admitted free and a higher duty put on flour than on corn, because it would encourage home milling and would give the cattle-feeder a chance by providing offals. At present America only sends flour and keeps the offal at home, which reduces the price of our cattle. If the whole were milled in this country it would be a distinct advantage. Bran and pollard are now very scarce. There should be no duty on linseed cake, decorticated cake, &c. Let maize come free but certainly not barley, because this would be the chief advantage to the Irish farmer; 1s. a quarter or barrel on barley would vastly increase production. I buy inferior barley for cattle-feeding, but not foreign; it is always cheaper to buy at home, and in a bad year I can always get plenty. In good years I cannot feed on barley and then I use maize, but not if I can get enough damaged barley. It would be more for the interests of agriculture if all foreign stores were brought into the country, it would oblige the small farmer to till more.

Duties.

There would be a distinct advantage to the labourer because more tillage would create a greater demand for him and consequently improved wages.

Effect on Labour.

If preferential arrangements with our colonies reduced the price of beef and increased the price of corn, I should cultivate my land.

Preference.

790

WITNESS No. 150.**Written Evidence.****MR. W. K. GREHAN**

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Lisbride, Roscommon).

I farm about 800—1,000 acres, some years more, some less; the greater portion is under pasture, and all the tillage is on my home farm.

I have farmed in Ireland all my life, and the industry is by no means improving—the great variations in the price of produce, dearness of store cattle, land unable to carry so much stock as it used, high rents, high railway rates and great loss of time on rail between producer and market, the low price of wool in recent years and the general smallness of profits are all elements in the depression.

State of Agriculture.

One of the most prosperous branches is the breeding of pure-bred stock, and in the last 2 years the profits have greatly diminished. Years ago we got a good price for the calf, the milk, and the fat cow, but beef is very plentiful, prices have fallen, and cow beef finds no sale. Just now the graziers are having a trying time with bullocks and heifers alike. As regards sheep, my neighbourhood is a great sheep-raising district, but the farmers now complain of the small profits. A certain farm of about 150 statute acres, 20 years ago, carried 45 3-year-old heifers and about 100 sheep, mostly 2-year-old wethers. I farm it now, and the most it will carry is 30—35 3-year-old cattle and 80 ewes. Years ago the profit was £6 to £9 a head for the year's feeding, without any feeding stuffs, now we seldom get more than £5 and often much less. I could name many other cases of reduced stock carrying capacity and diminished profits; true, rents are lower, but not low enough to balance the loss of quality in the land.

791

The quality of labour has diminished—the men have become very neglectful, fond of drink, unpunctual, work shorter hours, are careless with machinery, and when cautioned reply that the insurance-money more than balances the injury. 10 years ago men could be got at 7s.—9s. a week during harvest; now they want 14s., and are difficult to get at that. Wages are gone up 20—40 %. Most of our labourers are either small farmers themselves or the sons of small farmers, and we have to keep a sharp look out for good men. The Irish labourer to-day is a very different man from what he was years ago—he is more extravagant, especially in food, works less, and wants more pay. 4 years ago I had to increase the wages of my permanent hands, and the extra men wanted more in the following harvest. There was a small attempt at a strike last year, and I had to give 1s. a week more.

Labour and Wages.

Many cottages have been erected in various parts, but are occupied in most cases by a very low class of labourer—even tramps, and now and again by tradesmen.

Cottage Accommodation.

The Agricultural Department has sent out instructors, but the people only laugh at their teaching, and go on in the old way.

Education.

The rates would be less if better men were on the district councils. The class of men elected are hard on the farmers and graziers. The manner of levying income tax on valuation is very unjust indeed, as valuation has frequently but little relation to income.

Local Rates.

Rent averages 24s. 6d. per acre. I have very little labour on my out farms, save to pay a herd and get in some hay, which costs about £1 an acre by contract; labour on the home farm, 17s. 6d. per acre. Feeding stuffs, £50 per annum, total, as I consume all my corn. Manure, and especially artificials, is on the increase, £30 per annum.

Annual Outgoings.

I do not keep machinery long, but sell it and buy new, which is more economical. Foreign machinery will not stand wear and tear like the home made; it looks better, but does not last.

Railway rates are by no means the least of our troubles. It costs £2 8s. 4d. to send 8 or 9 beasts to my nearest market, Dublin, and £1 a head to see them in any of the North-eastern markets of England. There is no "market ticket" for the stock owner, and the Midland and Great Western Railway will not furnish a "special" unless one is a good customer, and will not find a "stock special" unless of 10 wagons, costing nearly £50. It is not every farmer who wants to send 80 or 90 head of cattle to market.

Railway Rates.

792

793 Delays in Transit.

Another serious matter is that the cattle trains are run at night for Dublin. The cattle have to be taken off their pastures at 6 p.m., walk 3 or 4 miles to the rail, stand in the cattle park till 10 p.m. to reach Dublin about 4 a.m., and be taken straight from the wagons to the market. Lower rates and, above all, quicker transit are very essential.

Duties.

Canadian Stores.

Almost every farmer, big and little, is agreed as to the desirability of the duties proposed. Industries would increase, and with better prices better wages could be paid. No fair-minded man could dispute the labourers' claim to a share. Canadian store cattle must not be allowed free entry, as this would kill the Irish trade with England, and the raiser of the calf, instead of getting his year's rent and taxes out of it at a year old, would have but little more than half. Though this is my opinion, it is against my own interest, as free admission of American stores would lessen the price of Irish, and there would be more room for profit on beef; but it would be better to put a good tax on cattle and meat of all sorts; let in wheat free, and let us make our flour at home.

WITNESS No. 151.

MR. H. T. HINCKS

(Farmer, Grazier and Agricultural Auctioneer, Wigston Hall, Leicester, representing the Leicestershire Chamber of Agriculture).

I am an agricultural auctioneer, coming into daily touch with farmers, and doing many tenant right valuations in the Midlands and Lincolnshire. I began farming in 1874. I farm 1,000 acres, 300 in Leicestershire and 700 in Berkshire, principally grass. It was formerly mixed farming, but now I feed bullocks and sheep, and rear. On the Berkshire farm I sell milk.

State of Agriculture.

Agriculture generally is as black as it can be. Sheep-breeding and cheese-making have been fairly good, also potatoes, bulbs, and seed-growing in favoured districts (1% of England)—but all other agricultural pursuits are particularly bad. Agriculture began to be bad in 1890. Many farmers have had to turn to tram-driving, &c., scores of big farmers have had to take small farms, others have gone to the dogs. Corn-growing has suffered the most of recent years owing to foreign competition, opening of virgin soils, and heavy railway rates. Foreign corn is helped unfairly as against our own corn. The Stilton cheese industry is holding its own, but this last has been a bad season; prices are depressed, and the cheese has not been good. The land where cheese is made has decreased very little in value. Stilton is a fashionable cheese, and makes a high price. We used to make 9d. for beef, now 6½d. Mutton has gone up this year. Pork is a very bad trade. The character of farming has changed through bad prices. I have put 400 acres down to grass the last 10 years, to reduce expenses for labour, machinery and implements.

795 Labour.

Two or three years back we had considerable labour difficulty. Now we have none as far as quantity goes, but our youngest agricultural labourer in Wigston is 70 years. All the good labour goes to other industries which pay better wages, the bad remains. In Berkshire we have more labour but a very bad quality; it is much less efficient than formerly. In Leicestershire and Berkshire we have local ploughing matches, &c., but it has been most difficult to get entries in the classes for young people, the old ones fill; in Leicestershire last year in the class for youths under 20 we had only 3 entries, one year we had none. It is exceptional to get a young hedge-cutter; hedge-cutting is getting a lost industry.

Wages.

Wages are practically the same as 30 years ago.

Railway Rates.

We pay enormously in railway rates, often more than the rent. To bring a bullock from Ireland to Leicestershire costs 14s., and from Leicestershire to London 6s., many go when fed to Ramsgate, Canterbury, and other Southern towns, and cost 8s. each, an average for carriage of cattle alone of 10s. per acre. On my milk farm in Berkshire, the railway charges come to 8s. an acre, the same as the net rent.

Education.

Agricultural education would be advantageous if we could pay labour sufficiently to keep them on the land after educating them, but it is no good doing this if they are going to the towns afterwards.

796 Local Rates.

Local rates are increasing generally. In Berkshire there has not been much change, but in Leicestershire near urban districts they have increased enormously. Rates at Wigston are 8s. 2d. in the £, and I get no benefit from the sewers and lighting for which I pay. The Agricultural Rates Act gives us back half on the land. On buildings I pay 8s. 2d. The Act is regarded as a considerable advantage to the farmer. The landlord has not benefited by it.

Annual Outgoings.

	Berkshire Farm.					Leicestershire Farm.			
	£ s. d.					£ s. d.			
Rent	..	0	8	0	..	..	1	8	6
Tithe	..	0	4	0	..	..	..	..	..
Feeding Stuffs ..	..	1	10	0	..	..	1	1	0
Labour	..	1	2	0	..	..	1	2	0
Manure	..	0	3	4	..	..	0	1	2
Machinery, &c. ..	..	0	5	0	..	..	0	5	0
Rates and Taxes ..	..	0	0	9	..	..	0	4	0
Railway Carriage ..	..	0	8	0	..	..	0	10	0
Total	..	4	1	1			4	11	8

The proposed duties would do us good but to a small extent. We are opposed to Mr. Balfour's proposals, **Duties.** because they would increase the price of what we buy, and not of what we produce. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would possibly equalise matters, and we should hope to get something better at some time. If prices rose in proportion with the duties it would do a lot of good, but if we admit Colonial free, and tax the foreign to a small amount only, prices of agricultural produce cannot rise much. I suggest doubling Mr. Chamberlain's proposed tax on foreign produce, and taking half this tax off as a preference on Colonial, *i.e.*, 10 % on foreign meat and dairy produce and 4s. per quarter on foreign corn, and 5 % on Colonial meat and dairy produce and 2s. per quarter on Colonial corn. Our own rates and taxes come to 2s. a quarter on corn, the Colonies pay none, and why should not they pay an acknowledgment for the use of our markets. Unless something is done much land will go out of cultivation. Nothing can help us except a duty on imported corn and meat. Half our land does not produce 10s. an acre rent, from which tithe, land tax, landlord's repairs, &c., must be deducted.

WITNESS No. 152.**MR. T. F. LEVINGE**

(Farmer and Grazier, Enniscoffy, Killucan, Co. Westmeath).

I farm 1,200 statute acres, all in pasture except 10 acres; 500 acres also for another person. I pasture cattle and sheep.

Grazing has not been so profitable in recent years as formerly, and we attribute this largely if not, altogether to foreign competition. 1902 was a remunerative season; we bought our cattle rather cheaper, got our young cattle in rather well, and it was also a very good year for crops and pasture and meadow, in fact, a good year all round. In the last 5 or 6 years we have had nothing like it. Tillage about held its own except for the scarcity and expense of labour. Taking 5 or 10 years as a basis, profits have most certainly decreased owing to scarcity of young cattle, foreign competition in meat and grain markets and cost of production. **State of Agriculture.**

My land is not fattening land, it is a store farm, and I am a store farmer almost exclusively. I stall feed a little, but not very much; foreign competition tells too much against stall feeding as it is very expensive. I fatten sheep. I export stores to England, generally 2 and 3 year olds; sometimes English farmers buy in Ireland, but generally on the other side. If the Colonies sent us young stores, say 2 years old, of which there has always been a shortage in my experience, then we could the better compete with them in the meat market; in other words, if feeders here could buy in cheaper they could afford to sell out cheaper. The complaint amongst graziers has always been that green stores are too dear and scarce to admit of a profit when competing with the foreigner; that is the only way that importation of stores would do us good. Though every beast sent over to us, as far as farming is concerned, does harm, we cannot tax $\frac{2}{3}$ of the population in order to benefit $\frac{1}{3}$. We must not raise the price of food to benefit farmers alone. If we got 2 year old stores and under it would not be such an advantage that it would encourage the breaking up of land now in grass so as to bring out a rural population, for the corn market, as far as we are concerned, is governed to a great extent by the meat market. The crops that we raise have been very largely used in the feeding of cattle, and foreign competition is hitting us so hard now that we cannot go to the expense of growing crops. The quality of cattle in our county in the last 20 years has improved, but there is room for improvement still. Breeding of young stock is not what it ought to be or is likely to be. I do not breed many calves myself. Horse breeding is extensively carried on, and it is as profitable as it used to be if first-class animals are bred, otherwise no. America, by exporting flour and keeping the offals at home, hits us very hard; the closing of the mills, which has resulted, has very much affected the production of pigs. I attribute the changes in the condition of agriculture to foreign competition; there is no other reason why it should have fallen off so much and become so unremunerative. Owing to that and to the scarcity of labourers the tillage has decreased. Foreign meat supplies have spoiled grass farming. Grain and meat were fully $\frac{1}{3}$ higher than now, while the cost of production has largely increased in both instances through want of useful labour and increase in cost of transit. The land of the country, at least as far as pasturage is concerned, has increased, and is vastly increasing in fertility through the introduction of artificial feeding and manures. What we want really is more agricultural labourers of a better type and more young stock of a better and more productive quality.

The supply of labourers is falling off very much. The able-bodied are emigrating and leaving behind nothing but the worn-out ones and the children. It is very hard indeed to get labourers and those we get are not the right sort at all. They work from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., with an hour for dinner in some places, though not with me; they get half an hour in the morning for their breakfast. Wages have increased very much within my experience. They have almost doubled in 35 years. We are now paying 9s. to 10s. a week, sometimes with a house, but not as a rule, and no milk or vegetables or anything of the kind; a trifle extra for overtime. The labourers' families vary very much in size, generally about 5. Some of my labourers live with me, and even then they are paying perhaps 1s. a week rent for their cottages. It is very hard to tell how they live or how they can get a living out of their small wage; it is very difficult, but they do get a living and apparently got a better living when wages were only half what they are at present. The labourers do not live on potatoes now—they used to. In a great many instances they buy baker's bread now, but they used to have their own meal and flour manufactured, if not out of their own corn exactly, at least out of native corn; but now they get the foreign flour, and bread is made from it. Maize meal was used at one time for food in our district. The population does not stay at home. America has taken our best agricultural and skilled labour.

We are fairly off for cottage accommodation, but some are poorly housed still. The Unions have been building a great deal, and there is a great advance in that direction. As a rule the cottages have been allotted to deserving cases. **Cottage Accommodation.**

Labour and Wages.

801 Education.

Agricultural education has improved, technical education is doing or will do good. The education of the young people has not made them any smarter in the way of doing their work, but they are better educated than they used to be. The people do not follow up the lectures and alter their methods of farming so much as one might expect and hope.

Annual Outgoings.

The average rent in my district is about 25s. the Irish acre. The rent of my home farm is about 15s. an acre, while all the other outgoings named amount to quite 5s., i.e., taxes, labour, and herding alone, not to speak of manure and feeding stuffs, of which I do not use much.

Railway Rates.

The railway companies have raised their freights at least twice. The Midland Great Western Railway Company have raised the rate for cattle. Market organisation is much the same; we send to meat markets, and it does not affect us.

Duties.

We want wheat from America, not flour; the American flour importation, duty free, has closed our mills, thrown a large number of operatives out of employment, and promoted emigration, whilst the cattle raised on the offals held back come over here free and undersell us in our own markets. We ought to get the same terms from other countries that we give them; our present practice is illogical altogether, and there is no other country but ours where it is allowed. I favour preferential tariffs to the Colonies. They ought to reciprocate and help us, if we help them they would probably help us; they ought to take what we can give them. If we give them facilities for taking out manufactured goods we should get more money for our cattle. With a preferential arrangement with the Colonies we should grow more meat and corn. As far as Ireland is concerned, being an agricultural country almost entirely, the success of preferential tariffs would largely depend on how far they increased and developed our labouring population and the quality and the quantity of our young stock. Without the former we cannot raise the grain to meet the increased supply required, and unless we have more and better young cattle and sheep to work on, we cannot cope with an increased demand for meat.

Preference.

802

WITNESS No. 153.

MR. JOHN C. McKAY

(Farmer and Cattle Salesman, Pallas House, Beaufort, Co. Kerry).

I buy and sell cattle and sheep. I do not raise stock, and have given up dairying. I farm 385 acres. I formerly tilled 75, but now only 17 acres for use on the farm.

State of
Agriculture.

803

The general condition of agriculture in our district is very unsatisfactory, due chiefly to the fall in prices through free imports. Tillage has decreased yearly for 25 years owing to increasing imports of corn and flour. Except that it renews the land tilling is useless. The price of butter does not cover its cost owing to free imports and transport from abroad being much cheaper than here. Dairy farming, oats and tillage are nearly 30 % less remunerative than formerly. Those who formerly bought our oats and stored and shipped them, now import cheaper from Holland and Belgium at the time oats are wanted. We can grow good grain and continued growing oats longer than anything, but nobody wants home produce. I purchased my holding under the Ashbourne Act and pay £167 per year. My mother paid £430 rent for the same farm in 1874. There is great demand for land. Farms sell for an enormous price. None are vacant except a few where farmers have been evicted. There are always many applicants—men who have made their money abroad, shopkeepers, pensioners, &c. A small farmer whose family do the work can hold his own, not so the large farmer, owing to increased cost of labour and the difficulty of disposing of large quantities of produce. Within the last 20 years wheat has fallen from 2s. to 9d. per 14 lbs., butter from 1s. 3d. per pound to 8d., beef 100s. to 53s. per cwt., pigs 70s. to 50s. If I had continued at tillage and dairy farming I should be very badly off, but I went in for dry stock and sheep. The high price paid by English feeders for store cattle has saved the Irish dairy farmer from ruin. We buy and keep young stock until they are fit for better land. We cannot finish them for the butcher, our land is not good enough. When ready we sell and lose less that way. I keep some of each kind of cattle. I deal in Shorthorns or a cross between Shorthorns and Kerry blacks. I buy them generally 18 months old, in August to October, and keep them on, if I can, and sell them in June. Some who rear calves sell them 4 months old at £2 to £4, foreign imports compel them, through poverty, to sell at that age. Eighteen-months old Shorthorns cost £6 10s. average. We export much mountain cattle. The demand for our store stock is decreasing and the price is down 20s. a head. Firkin butter is gradually being pushed out of my county in favour of fresh butter. Killorglin and Killarney are our markets, I live mid-way between the two. Killorglin is near Tralee and as accessible as Killarney; the railways run to it, and Tralee has a bacon factory.

804

Canadian Stores.

If Canadian stores are let in, the small farmer will be wiped out, as he depends on calves to make yearlings. There would be no price for breeders, and the capital value of stock in Ireland would diminish. Three-quarters of the farmers of Ireland hold only 40 or 50 acres each, they cannot stall feed, and would have to give up dairying, milking, and calves, and buy Canadian stores.

Labour.

Labourers will work only from 7.30 a.m. to 6 p.m., and refuse to work if you complain. We cannot get more labourers, except old men and young children. Labourers have on an average 8 children each, and bring them up cheaper and better than in the cities, but all the lads of 17 to 20 emigrate under the impression that outside Ireland they need not work.

Wages.

Wages have increased 25 % the last 20 years. I give labourers 10s. weekly, besides a cottage and garden, etc., rent free.

Causes of Change.

The change in agriculture began in 1879 and is due to constantly decreasing prices of produce, especially oats, wheat and butter; rents being too high, the tenants getting no reduction till nearly ruined; increased facilities for importing foreign produce, want of co-operation and capital, and excessive railway charges.

Railway rates are the ruin of a great part of Ireland. Cattle to London cost the same from Killarney as from America.	Railway Rates.	805
The soils of foreign countries are so rich, they will produce crops for years without manure, whereas our land is so poor that it will produce no crop without being heavily manured. In America they can rear cattle for practically nothing.	Foreign Advantages.	
Rates are increasing. Under the Act of 1899 a district councillor, &c., need not be a ratepayer, he can and does spend the ratepayers' money as he likes. Rates would be higher, but under the Local Government Act the Government pays 1s. in the £ on land rates.	Local Rates.	
Rent (instalment of purchase) £167 4s., or 9s. per acre; labour 8s.; manure 3s.; machinery, &c., 1s.; and rates and taxes 2s. 6d.	Annual Outgoings.	
Mr. Chamberlain does not propose enough duties, but those proposed would make a great improvement in this country, especially to those farmers who have purchased their holdings, tending to raise the price of all agricultural produce and encouraging farmers to cultivate more land and so give more regular employment and better wages, and keep our best workmen at home. Milling, farming, wool and other factories would start again, all of which have stopped through foreign produce entering free, while a heavy duty is charged on anything we export. Flour ought to pay much more duty than corn, and dead meat should pay more than live cattle because when cattle are killed here we get the benefit of the hides, tallow, &c., and the labour in killing. Bacon should be taxed the same as dead meat. The labourer would have more regular employment at higher wages, he would get home-grown unadulterated food as cheap as the food he buys now.	Duties.	806
Preferential arrangements with Colonies would require no changes in our mode of farming, for if there is an equal duty put on corn and stock it will be more satisfactory for large farmers to depend on cattle (unless Canadian stores are admitted again) and small farmers on tillage and butter and selling young stock.	Preference.	

WITNESS No. 154.

Written Evidence.

MR. DONALD MACKINTOSH

(Farmer and Grazier, Dunamais, Stradbally, Queen's Co., Ireland).

I farm 320 statute acres of which $\frac{1}{3}$ is waste, permanent grazing, &c., the remainder rotation tillage and grass. I stall feed cattle, rear and fatten sheep, pigs, &c.	State of Agriculture.	
My experience of the district extends over 14 years, and though some years have been better than others as regards prices for produce, there has not been much change during this time. Prices are a shade worse than they have been but most farmers had their rents considerably reduced. Some have taken to wheat growing on the ground that the yield of barley per acre is still decreasing. I was obliged to give up stall-feeding cattle about 8 years ago—I could not make it pay on the Dublin prices for fat cattle—but tillage farmers must keep it up as they need manure. Just over 20 years ago stall-fed beef sometimes fetched 80s. per cwt., now it is rarely over 55s. Mutton has fallen at the same rate. Profits have decreased. An Irish acre of barley formerly yielded 20 to 27 barrels, now the average is 14 barrels; the price has fallen from 20s.-23s. to 14s. Oats have fallen proportionately. An average acre of turnips, worth then £25 for cattle and sheep food, is now not worth £12 on account of the low price of fat stock. Beetroot growing might be made a profitable industry in Ireland, and tobacco should be allowed to be grown free of duty for a few years till the industry took root.		807
We have no special difficulty here as to the supply of labour; machinery has balanced the reduced supply. When the Militia were called up during the Boer war I had to give a rise of 1s. per week and have continued it since. The Labourers (Ireland) Act has done good by aiding the building of cottages and so keeping the people on the land. I attribute the change for the worse in agriculture almost entirely to Free Trade, which has drained our country of money to enrich the foreigner and deprived the British artisan of his work.	Labour.	
Outgoings per statute acre: rent, 14s.; labour, 14s.; feeding stuffs, 9s.; manure, 10s.; machinery, etc., 3s.; local rates and taxes, 1s. 9d.; upkeep of farm horses, 6s.	Annual Outgoings.	
The proposed duties will keep money circulating at home which now goes abroad; will provide work and raise wages. The labourer will share in the general prosperity. In Ireland the majority of agricultural labourers will have cottages and plots of land. The number of holders of a cottage and 1 acre under the Labourers (Ireland) Act is yearly increasing—all of whom produce the greater part of their household food and sell fat pigs, poultry, &c. If foreign bacon is kept out they will do much more pig fattening than at present.	Duties. Effect on Labourer.	808

WITNESS No. 155.

MR. M. C. MAGAN

(Tiller and Grazier, Killashee, County Longford).

We are engaged in grazing, tilling, and fattening cattle on 400 acres, of which 20 are under crops, and the rest is grazing.

Our land is very good for tillage. We can grow roots very well. Roots pay only as a supplementary food for stores, sheep and pig feeding. Grain and straw have improved in price. 10 years ago straw could be bought for 10d. and 1s. a cwt., now it is worth 2s. 6d. Oats are worth 10s. or 11s. a barrel (14 stone). We

State of
Agriculture.

809 State of
Agriculture
—continued.

grow 14 or 15 barrels of barley to the acre. Most farmers have abandoned tillage in this country. The breed of cattle has improved the last 20 years. The Department of Agriculture has sent us many better pure-bred bulls, and we have local shows which encourage farmers who see the best prize cattle, and aim to produce such cattle. We have the best bulls in Ireland including Aberdeens, Shorthorns and Herefords. Pigs have been very dear and very scarce in Ireland for the last 12 months. Profits lately have been a minus quantity. Stores have been selling at 35s. per cwt. live weight while best beef was making only 30s. Tillage has been more profitable lately, we get a little better prices than years ago. Fattening cattle pays occasionally but is very uncertain. Farming is like a triumph of hope over experience. Raising and feeding stores pay better than fattening.

Imports.

There are enormous imports of bacon into Ireland. Our pigs are sold, and make better prices than the American bacon which nearly everyone uses, and is very fat, heavy, and cheap. Small farmers and labourers live almost entirely upon it. They buy it at 2d. per lb. less than bacon produced at home. We get 6d. per lb. for our pork and pay 5d. for bacon from America. This is why so many pigs are imported. Foreign competition is affecting the price of fat cattle more every day, and fattening cattle is growing less profitable. Cattle bought as stores in spring and early summer are sold in autumn and winter when fat at the same price or less than they cost—this is due entirely to foreign competition. Much foreign meat comes into Ireland. Foreign competition has caused its fall in price. Home farmers are nearly choked out by foreigners. It is deplorable to see everything imported, you cannot buy a lamp chimney, or a rake, or anything not “Made in Germany” or America.

810

Labour.

There is a fair supply of labour but it is becoming scarcer and dearer. The men do not work as well as formerly.

Wages.

Wages 20 % higher than formerly, average 2s. a day, in winter much less.

Causes of Change.

The change in the condition of agriculture is owing to increasing difficulties in the way of labour and reduction in tillage, large tracts of land hitherto cultivated are now being used for fattening cattle and grazing purposes. The demand for stores has consequently increased, leaving no margin of profit to those farmers whose land is suited for fattening and who have to meet an ever-increasing foreign competition.

Railway Rates.

Transport rates are much higher than abroad or in England.

Co-operation.

We have better markets and more frequent fairs. We have co-operative dairy societies in my district. They are not much advantage. There is no co-operative society for the purchase of pigs. There are bacon factories in the large centres, but very few in the country districts.

Cottage
Accommodation.

There are plenty of cottages. They are building many out of the rates to be let considerably under cost price, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the cost are paid out of the rates.

Foreign Methods.

In Holland, Belgium and Germany farmers till the land more economically than we do. They work much harder. They have also a better climate. They are much more thrifty and enterprising. We are a bit lazy in Ireland.

811

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes are no higher.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent about 12s. per acre. Labour 7s. Feeding stuffs 5s, manure 1s. ; machinery, implements and tackle 1s., rates and taxes 2s.

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would benefit Ireland. There would be more tillage, giving more labour, and we could get better prices for our cattle and all our produce. A duty of 2s. would raise the price of corn and food stuffs a little but not appreciably. It would be an advantage of £1 or 15s. an acre to the farmer. We should be more dependent on home produce. The importation of Canadian stores would affect us, because we produce more stores than fat cattle ; we should not get such a good price for stores. The small farmers make their living by raising calves, and would be ruined if Canadian stores came in. Labourers would receive an advantage. They would not be rushing to America and elsewhere. Any advantage to the farmer is likewise advantageous to the labourer. When produce sells well the farmer can employ more labour and pay better wages. What use are the cheap loaf and cheap meat without the money to buy them. Labourers go to America because they cannot get employment here ; many people if they got 12s. a week would stay at home, and others in America would come back if sure of 12s. a week.

812

WITNESS No. 156.

MR. FRANK MARTIN

(Farmer, Market Gardener, Grazier, Land Agent and Valuer, Hubbert's Bridge, Boston, Lincolnshire, representing the Boston Branch of the Lincolnshire Chamber of Agriculture).

I feed stock, grow corn, and also carry on market gardening. My land is in two farms, one of 400 acres and the other 300 acres. The former is a strong land farm, and the latter “silty” soil suitable for growing anything. On this I grow potatoes, cauliflowers, celery, &c. It goes wherever we can find the best market, but most of it comes to London.

State of
Agriculture.

Corn growing in recent years has been a very bad business, but we must go on with it, for the straw and for the rotation of crops. You cannot farm clay land on any other lines except by seeding it down. As to stock raising, no man can produce beef at 7s. 6d. a stone, the ruling price for the last 5 years. Sheep at the present time are rather good, but beasts are anything but good. Pigs are very bad indeed. They have never been lower. The price of pork is very low, 5s. a stone at the present time. There is a surplus of pigs all over the district. Sheep at the present time are a very good business. Mutton is very dear, but the wool is making the difference. The offal helps the price a good deal. No branch of farming has shown an increased profit of late years except sheep farming. Five or six years ago it was very good, but last year is the worst I

have experienced, especially on heavy land, much worse than 1879. Prices are lower, and we had acres this year that we could not sow at all. Lots of seed was sown that never came up, the tilth was so bad from the wet winter and dry spring that we could never work the land.

Cabbages, cauliflowers and celery have paid hitherto, but they have done very badly this year. The celery trade has never been lower, there is too much grown now. Some washed celery comes in from abroad. Market gardening is nothing like as good as it used to be. There is too much local competition. Potatoes have been the only remunerative crop grown on a comparatively big acreage. My district grows a great many earlies and second earlies, which are sent away in the green state. They all have to be boxed and sprouted, and you have to do them extremely well—spend £3 an acre on artificial manure as well as farmyard manure. On the average during the last 20 years potatoes have been a paying crop, and have been the salvation of the district agriculturally. The ruling price in Lincolnshire is from 50s. to 52s. 6d. a ton for good quality. It is low. If this year's crops be all sound it will be a fair but not a paying crop.

Potatoes.

Our own crop cannot be produced profitably and we are still subject to foreign competition to the extent of 2,000 tons a week principally in the towns in the Southern parts of England. In the corresponding week of last year it was 12,000 tons. Competition is severe and is increasing. In early potatoes we experience a good deal of competition from abroad. If the foreigners are quite finished before ours are ready, then we do all right, but if we both meet in the market it is a bad look out. They come from Jersey and St. Malo. Profits in my district have decreased in proportion to the acreage farmed. The mustard seed industry in South Lincolnshire is being seriously threatened by competition from Holland.

Foreign Competition.

Mine is certainly one of the most prosperous agricultural districts in the United Kingdom, but during the last 10, 15 or 20 years corn could not be grown profitably, and the agriculturists have turned from it to potatoes mainly, market gardening, and small seed growing.

Turnip seed growing is certainly becoming less profitable. The price that I contract for at present is about $\frac{1}{3}$ less than it used to be, there has been too much grown. The change began before 1879, which in our particular part was an extremely bad year. We were all under water. Just about then the great fall in prices all over the country began, still in 1879 the prices of corn were much higher than now.

We are always short of labour. Cottages are plentiful but many are empty. All our best young men, our horsemen, as soon as they get to be good fellows, go into the towns, to the railway, or as carters, &c. They tire of farm work, and prefer a livelier time in the towns, where they get about £1 a week. They are never as well off as with us, but they rarely come back again. The quality of the work is certainly not as good as years ago; but taking all kinds of labour combined I do not think you can find much fault with it. There are very few young men who understand lambing, hedging, ditching and thatching; those that go to the towns always work the horses, and if they stop with us take those sort of jobs. Only the old men do the hedging and ditching and thatching.

Labour.

My total wages bill is more than ever it was before. I pay nearly £2 an acre including the grass. I employ much more labour now, considering that I have altered my style of farming, than my father used to do. The market gardening and the change of cropping makes the labour bill bigger. Wages have gone up in recent years, especially those of the single horsemen. We pay an extravagant wage, compared with a few years ago, to our single men. A good horseman gets £25 or £26 a year and 9s. a week for board over and above that.

Wages.

We have a lot of cottages. Many are tumbling down, as there are no occupiers, but just where I live and for 4—5 miles away they are all occupied. I have enough and they are fairly good. A certain wage will not fill our empty cottages now. We pay a high wage. They are not filled because we have a great inflow of Irish labour for the harvest, which we do not want in the winter.

Cottage Accommodation

A little is done for technical agricultural education. You can get a grant from the County Council provided you teach hedging, ditching, thatching, &c., and money for prizes for competition if you have a class. One pupil is sufficient to draw a grant. There is not the slightest doubt if the school children were taught agricultural matters, and not always taught to think they are above the land they would not be so much inclined to go into the towns for clerks as now.

Education.

Before the Agricultural Rates Act was in force the rates on my farm amounted to about £112. Last year they were £105, i.e., nearly the same as before the Act. The Education Rate is 6d., and has something to do with it, but the maintenance of the highways costs us most. This and the education ought to be paid for out of Imperial funds. Local rates are one of the great burdens on farming.

Local Rates.

Two or three crops are got off it, a crop of early potatoes and then celery. Wages £2 an acre. Feeding stuffs, 30s.; manure, 12s., including the grass. Machinery, say 5s. or 4s., not including depreciation. Rates and taxes, 3s.

Annual Outgoings.

Our market organisation has not changed much, but we have an Association round Spalding and Boston to fight the Railway Companies on the rebate question. Some arrangement might be made with the Railways if the farmers could be got to combine to deliver their produce in larger quantities than at present, but I do not see how this is to be done. If we could load 500 tons of potatoes at a station in full trucks, we could possibly get a cheaper rate. The rate from Boston to London is now 9s. 2d. in 4 ton lots, and 8s. 4d. in 5 ton lots. If I were to offer the Railway Company now 500 tons instead of 5 tons I should not get a cheaper rate. The rates on potatoes from certain parts of Lincolnshire have recently been indirectly increased by the withdrawal of a rebate of 2s. per ton from certain stations, so that what they now carry at 9s. 2d. a ton, for 15 years prior to March of last year, they conveyed to London for 7s. 2d. per ton from Spalding. The Executive Committee of the Lincoln Railway Rates Committee are at present engaged in an agitation, and are going to the Railway and Canal Commission Court as to this increase of 2s. Public opinion has been so strong that considerable funds have been raised by subscription, and the County Council is considering the advisability of supporting. Railway rates are heavy, and there is no doubt whatever that foreign produce, delivered in bulk in certain places, is carried at less freight than the English.

Railway Rates.

817 Duties.

Colonial produce should be taxed and foreign twice the amount. A 1s. registration duty on everything that comes in is far better for British agriculture than 2s. on foreign corn only ; I would put another 2s. on to the foreigner. All corn should be taxed, including maize, though farmers use immense quantities, for if maize comes free and barley is taxed the brewers will use more maize than at present, and so by decreasing the demand for English barley, lower the price. Flour should pay a higher duty than corn so as to get the feeding stuffs here. As to the feeding stuffs the 1s. registration duty made a great difference to the British farmer. We got all the bran we wanted, and now we can, comparatively speaking, get none, and previous to the duty we could not get any ; further, it lowered the prices of all feeding stuffs at least £1 a ton. Feeding stuffs should not come in free. A 2s. duty might raise corn 1s. for a year or two, but it would come back to the old level by giving the Colonials preference. They would produce more. For the same reason 5% on meat and dairy produce is not enough. A duty of 5% upon imported fruit and vegetables, including potatoes, would be an advantage. I do not favour any distinction in the duties on live or dead meat. It seems an impossibility to mark meat so as to prevent the sale of foreign for English.

Any increase in prices will be very slight. If the large sums of money raised by these duties were employed in relieving the land of the Education Rate and the maintenance of the highways that would be a benefit to agriculture.

818

WITNESS No. 157.

MR. THOMAS MOLYNEUX

(Farmer and Grazier, The Decoy, Dunlavin, Co. Wicklow).

State of
Agriculture.

I farm about 500 acres, mostly grazing, about $\frac{1}{2}$ being capable of fattening cattle. I till 20 or 25 acres on my home farm, just enough to keep horses and cattle, in fact I have often to buy corn, cake, pollard and other feeding stuffs for stall feeding. I fatten 50 or 60 beasts on the land to a finish, and as many more in the stalls. It is very hard to compete with the heavy supplies of meat that are poured into this country from all parts of the world free, keeping down the price of our cattle, and I would strongly support any tariff arrangements that would keep up the price of meat to a certain standard at which the lands of Ireland could be grazed and worked at a fair profit. For the last 5 or 6 months the cattle are paying very little for their keep. What we can get for keeping cattle now is only about half what it was 40 or 50 years ago. I cannot get more than about £4 for the keep of a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 3-year-old beast for the year, and my father, who did not feed them as well as I do always was not satisfied with less than £8 for keeping the same beast for the year. That was before American cattle were coming over in the way they do now. We cannot grow corn to pay in Wicklow. The average would be about 15 barrels to the acre, and although the price of land is not heavy at the present price of corn you could not live.

819

Wages.

The rate of wages is not too high, it is from 10s. to 12s. per week without a house. I am paying 2 or 3 men 12s. a week at present, and some who have a house and $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre of land work for 9s. per week. The land and cottage is worth 2s. a week. I have to till their land for them, so that by increasing the extent of their holding it would be putting more work on the farmer. Nearly every man who has $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre gets it tilled by the large farmers round. They send them their horses in the idle time to till the bit of land and put in the crop. They have no extras for hay or harvest, but generally we give them something at the end of the harvest—say £1. You must give them something like that, though there is nothing in the agreement which binds you to do so.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Many cottages have been built by the Poor Law Guardians, and the labourers put into them. The rent is 50s. a year for the cottage and $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre of land, and the men are free to work for whoever can pay them the most. The cottages have done a great deal of good, they have comfortably housed the working classes, but a great many more are still wanted to meet the demand—as many more as are already built. Even though it may be a loss to the ratepayer they are wanted and are quite a necessity. They are a benefit to the country, as they keep the labourers at home. If they have a comfortable house they will stay there, even if they may not have very much of an income. In all instances the rent received is very much less than would repay the cost of the houses to the ratepayers.

820

Railway Rates.

Railway facilities are good—a branch of the Great Southern and Western runs to Dunlavin—but charges are very high. A wagon of 8 cattle from Dunlavin to Dublin, about 30 miles, costs 24s. I believe cattle can be brought from America for about the same price as they can be sent to the English market from here. It takes 25s. a head to send a beast from my place to the English market. From a shareholder's point of view the Great Southern and Western Railway is not doing remarkably well.

Markets.

We are badly off for markets in our district, we have to send to Dublin.

Local Rates and
Taxes.

Local rates and taxes, since the Local Government Act came into operation, have increased about $\frac{1}{2}$. The Guardians lose by the cottages and $\frac{1}{2}$ acres they give to the labourers, and that is one of the items that make the rates higher.

Duties.

I am very strongly in favour of protection ; it would be the salvation of this country. It is not fair to have everything coming here free and then be charged a tariff on everything that is exported. On wool sent to America there is 6d. per lb. duty, and other things are worse. In dealing with another country it is right to put on a duty in proportion to what they charge us for goods sent into their country. It is not Free Trade to let other countries charge us a heavy duty, and let them dump what they do not require on us free. The duty of 2s. would not enable me to grow wheat, but in counties where they go in for tillage it would be a means of helping them to do so. It is a pity to see nearly all the large mills closed. That makes feeding

stuffs, pollard and other offals, very dear. If those mills were working they would give a great deal of employment. We have any amount of water power, but several mills are lying idle because they cannot make flour to sell at the price at which it is imported. A duty of 2s. would have the effect of re-opening those mills. If that was not enough I should be inclined to make it more if I had the power. It would give very much more employment and there would be better wages, and people would be better able to pay the higher prices than they are to pay the low prices now. A considerable tax on flour would tend to open the mills quicker than a trifling tax on wheat. I would tax the manufactured articles heavier than the raw material. Even if the wheat came in free a strong tax on the manufactured article would be an improvement. If more of the inferior grass land was ploughed and tilled it would give more employment, but I do not think it would pay. Much of the poor land that is not tilled now is marshy and more of it is inferior. If Mr. Chamberlain's ideas were carried out, and perhaps something added to the duties by and by, tilling such land might pay. It is nearly a necessity that something like that should be done if a rural population is to be kept in Ireland. The population is decreasing and if you wanted to get a lot of work done you could not. You are limited to men resident in the district, and then, of course, if they have not constant employment they will not stay.

Effect on
Milling.

821

Effect on
Population.

WITNESS No. 158.

822

MR. HENRY M. ODLUM

(Stock Raiser and Farmer, Killmoney, Rathangan, Kildare).

My farming is chiefly tillage and stock raising, I farm 450 acres, of which 40 are in tillage, and 410 grass.

Agriculture has been depressed, and prices have been uneven and falling the last 15 years. Tillage has not paid during the last 5 years mainly owing to low prices for produce and beef. The latter sold so badly last season that I gave up stall feeding, and now give my root crops to store beasts. Mutton fluctuates owing to an uneven foreign supply, rising or falling with a decrease or increase of imports, but it has paid better than anything else. For years profits have decreased mainly through fall in prices. Beef has dropped from 84s. per cwt. to 37s. Wool from 2s. per lb. to from 5½d. to 11d. Wheat from 35s. per barrel (20 stone) to 17s. Barley from 20s. (16 stone barrel) to 14s. 6d. Oats from 18s. (14 stone) to 10s. Wool has been very low up to 1905. The agricultural depression is chiefly due to enormous foreign supplies placed on the markets at a price hopelessly below that at which home stuff can be sold with profit. Cheapness of raising and importing foreign, compared with the cost of producing and marketing home stuff, prevents us competing with other countries. This began to be felt when foreign imports became considerable.

State of
Agriculture.

Many of the youngest and best labourers have emigrated owing to lack of employment.

Wages are slightly higher than formerly.

Labour.

823

Railway rates need revision because they interfere with industry, they are out of all reason compared with other countries, especially for stock.

Wages.

Railway Rates.

A slight attempt has been made to develop the co-operative system of buying and selling but it has not succeeded owing to apathy and want of organisation and capital.

Co-operation.

Our methods of farming are more expensive than those abroad. More labour is required here than on a relatively larger farm in the United States.

Foreign Methods.

Rent £1, labour 18s., feeding stuff, &c., 2s. 6d., manure 3s., machinery, &c., 2s. 6d., rates and taxes 2s., and the net at 6s. 9d. per acre.

Annual Outgoings.

I approve of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals which would tend to develop this country very much, and although they would not immediately benefit farmers greatly, they would tend to equalize matters and render home agriculture possible. The labourer would share in the benefit. The farmer's prosperity is the labourers' only hope, and there would be a decided advantage to the farmer.

Duties.

824

WITNESS No. 159.

MR. JOHN RICHARDS

(Farmer and Grazier, Stacey Hill, Wolverton, Bucks).

I farm 1,100 to 1,200 acres, all grass except 40 acres. I started 25 years ago gradually converting the tillage into grass, but have done 200 acres in the last 3 years. It was heavy land, and I could not make it pay by tilling it. I grew wheat, barley, oats and beans. I am certain I can make it pay better under grass than as arable.

I started milk farming 17 or 18 years ago, with 60 cows. I kept on 10 or 12 years, and then labour got scarce; our men would not work on Sundays, and the railway company was rather hard on us. We had to send the milk away every day at 8 a.m., and on Sunday at 7 a.m., so our men had to come between 3 and 4 in the morning to milk. I have now only one milking cow. I now buy in my stock yearly as stores and feed them, sheep as well. I change them every year.

825 State of Agriculture.

In my district, where farmers grow corn, mow the grass and sell everything they produce, none do any good unless they can stock their land and consume the produce at home. Corn growing does not pay. It might pay if it were all consumed at home by cattle. I converted my tillage, because of the fall in the price of corn, and more and more land is going down to grass for this reason. Cattle feeding has become very much less remunerative, and prices have fluctuated very much, particularly of late. Between the price of beef now and 20 years ago, there is a shilling a stone difference, i.e., £5 on a bullock. The price of beef now is about 6d. a pound; it is lower than it has been for some years, and is still falling. Mutton has done fairly well all the time and still holds its own. I should say mutton pays. Sheep have been a steady trade for years, but the price of wool has been in the past about three times as much as of late years. My profits have undoubtedly diminished.

Labour.

We have had labour difficulties, but not the last 2 or 3 years. Labour is more plentiful now than a few years ago. We wanted it then, now we do not need anything like so much, as the land is under grass. Where I live there are about 400 acres, and when I went there about $\frac{1}{2}$ was arable, employing 14 men and a foreman. Now I do all the work with about three. The quality does not improve. The young men all go to the towns and there has been no sign in the last year or two of their return to the country. The railway workshops close by absorb them. One of my men had eight boys, and they stopped with me for a year or two after they left school, but there is not one of them on the land now.

826 Wages.

In our district, cattlemen get about 16s. or 17s. a week. My men get about 17s. a week in wages and good cottages free. In hay-time and harvest they have perquisites in addition, which would make the wages about £1 a week all told, which compares favourably with wages in the towns, for they have no rent, rates, taxes or anything to pay out. The total money payments per week for labour are considerably less than in former years.

Cottages.

We now have plenty of cottage accommodation. Years ago, when we wanted more labour, it was not so, but now we have more than we really want.

Education.

Agricultural education is either too good or not in the proper direction. When a boy leaves school he goes to the factory and stops no longer on the land than he can help.

Local Rates.

The local rates and taxes in Buckinghamshire have advanced in recent years. We are rated with the little towns and have to help them. We are assessed to the borough rates. In the country proper the rates are fairly low, on my farm between 2s. and 3s. per acre. That appears to be a very small sum per acre, but it would be between 3s. and 4s. in the £.

Annual Outgoings.

The rent on some of the land is 15s. up to £1, and some up to 40s. The labour on grass land is a very small item in our shire, nowhere near 10s. an acre. Feeding stuffs are cheaper than they were. I use a considerable quantity at certain times of the year. We do not use the same quantity of manure on grass that we should have done on the arable.

827 Agricultural Rates Act.

The general experience in our district is that the tenants have benefited, perhaps not to the full extent, because the buildings are rated rather high. We took the buildings with the land and would not have given so much if they were not with it. We have to pay the same as the towns on our buildings, and do not get quite as much as it looks. Whatever benefit accrues we get, and the landlords do not interfere in any way, I hope to see the Act continued, it is a consideration with our tenant farmers. Profits are so reduced that now we have to look at very small things.

Railway Rates.

We are not particularly adversely affected by railway rates.

Duties.

If corn could be got to such a price that it would pay for farming the whole country would benefit by it, the land would be broken up, the labourers would be wanted again, and the farmer would be able to pay them, and there would be a lot more money spent in the country in all ways. But with things as they are, if there is no improvement, it is difficult to keep on. With wheat at 40s. a quarter (it cannot be grown under), barley about 30s., and oats 20s., much land now under pasture would be reconverted to arable. Some land does not go down to grass at all satisfactorily, and that would no doubt be broken up again. In the villages there used to be a blacksmith and 2 or 3 carpenters and wheelwrights; now there is a blacksmith between half a dozen villages. For every 20 or 30 men employed there would be 30 or 40 others dependent on them for their living, but they have all been swept into the towns.

Effect on Labour.

The naturally increased demand for labour would increase its value, and the labourer would be able to command a higher price.

828 Maize.

Maize was not much used years ago, but when corn growing fell off, substitutes had to be purchased. If the land is put under the plough again to anything like the extent it was before, I do not think there would be such a demand for maize in this country as in the last few years because there would be more feeding stuffs grown at home.

WITNESS No. 160.

MR. HARRY S. SANKEY

(Farmer and Cattle Salesman, Fort Frederic, Virginia, Co. Cavan).

I farm about 500 acres. My principal business is buying young calves and selling them out as 2-year-olds.

State of Agriculture

Calves are increasing in price but, where dairies exist, the quality has greatly gone down because the farmers try to rear them on the separated milk and do not give them the small quantity of boiled crushed cake or linseed required to make up the loss of fat. The profits on the sale of 2-year-old cattle are not what

they were, calves are dearer and the selling price of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ 2-year-old beast has fallen. Some explanation of this fall and the great fluctuation in prices is to be found in the large amount of land turned down to grass in England and Scotland, where enough stock is bought to graze the land, but if the turnip crop is short and there is nothing else to fall back upon these cattle are thrown on the market at a low price. Co. Cavan grows young stock for Co. Meath. I do not deal in pigs myself, but they have gone up in price and are a very irregular market. In the old days the farmers of Wexford and Wicklow killed and cured their own bacon, selling the prime pieces to factors and consuming the rest.

Labour has doubled in price and halved in quality; there has been a very great falling off in the last 25 or 30 years. Recent legislation, by giving the men an Irish acre or even $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre, has turned them into something which is neither farmer nor labourer, with just enough to make them almost, but not quite, independent and to place them in the position of not caring whether they work or no, and when they do, their work is very poor. This has injured the farmer more than any fall in prices. The labourers feed their pigs and cattle and fowls on the wayside, often doing great damage to fences. It is really astonishing how some of them with apparently nothing find the money to make a start and do well. Want of energy is their great defect, and this is where the foreigner beats them. I have the greatest difficulty in getting them to work to time in the morning, even with my steward on the spot. The fact of the country being cut up into small holdings reduces employment, for the tenants cannot afford to pay more than about 50 days work in the year. My men are employed all the year round and work till 6 or 7 occasionally, in winter till 3.30 or 4; they have the same wages all the year round, viz., 1s. 2d. per diem, with an hour each for breakfast and dinner. This is the common labourers' wage; an occasional man will ask 2s. 6d. and all meals (sometimes 5s.). 40 years ago the wage was 8d. per diem, and yet they managed to live and rear large families; then they lived on "stirabout," made from oats or wheat ground locally, with cow's or goat's milk; now on white bread, tea and American bacon at 7d. per lb. They have given up Indian meal as not being economical—it is not economical even for cattle feeding.

Too many so-called labourers' cottages have been built already, and are inhabited by persons who are not labourers, the ground attached is too much. Cottages with half a rood of ground for growing vegetables, as in England, would have been much better. The labourers could get a cottage for a shilling a week, or a day's labour from the farmers, and though in the past some of these were wretched hovels the sanitary authority could have interfered to compel the farmers to improve them. Recent legislation has reduced the farmer's rent and raised the labourer's wage in proportion.

The lecturers of the Board of Agriculture have dealt with the question of farmyard as against artificial manure and the necessity of liming the land, but have not made much impression. I have seen most excellent results in Cavan, 40 years ago when labour was cheap, from the free use of lime. In those days within a 10 mile radius we had over 200 lime kilns, now there are none. The excuse is that there is no turf to burn lime, but this is not the case, the people are too indolent to do it. Much of the instruction given is out of place, e.g., horse-breeding to men with 10 or 12 acres; better teach them how to plough with horned cattle and to use oxen for carting as abroad, and to sell their 2-year-old horses at a profit instead of keeping them to sell at 4 years for less than the price of a 2-year old bullock; the foreign practice of tethering cattle while grazing is also worth teaching.

Rates are going up in consequence of the cottage building, which though it tends to keep the people on the land is producing a class of people who are neither labourers nor farmers.

Our communications are practically non-existent; there is not a railway or canal within 25 miles. The Great Northern and Midland Great Western have, it would appear, agreed to leave the district as a mutual feeder for their existing lines.

We need some form of protection in the way of duties. It is a distinct hardship to have to produce against cheaper labour, bounties and duties against our own goods in other countries. There should certainly be a tax on flour; the free importation of flour has destroyed the milling industry. The duties would, perhaps, benefit the country at large more than the farmers, but would encourage them to employ more labourers.

WITNESS No. 161.

MR. DAVID A. SPENCE

(Farmer and Grazier, Dunninald Mains, Montrose).

I farm in East Mid-Scotland, and also Mid-Kent. We keep mostly feeding cattle (not rearing), and grow wheat and other cereals. We have 100 acres of potatoes in Kent and 400 or 500 in Scotland. I have joint management of 2,800 acres on long lease farms in Scotland. I was on the Scottish Agricultural Commission last year examining the agricultural conditions of Denmark, especially with regard to government assistance, co-operation and education.

Growing wheat, oats and barley is at a very low ebb owing to bad prices. Cattle feeding is very much worse. Potato growing fluctuates but pays best, especially with suitable land. With that exception we cannot make so much money or employ so much labour as formerly. We were very large feeders of Canadian cattle which we cannot get now. Our land is highly rented and unsuitable for rearing, we have no water in summer, our fields are unsheltered and unfenced, and therefore landlords had to erect suitable buildings for cattle feeding. When the supply of store cattle was cut off 12 years ago cattle profits fell £3 a head. It is hopeless to expect Canadian cattle again. We feeders are too few to be powerful. Rents are considerably less than 20 years ago but inclined to go up; 20 years ago they were 43% higher. Our rental, in some instances, does not pay 5% on the buildings and draining, so we are really paid to take our land, considering interest on improvements. The fall in prices of grain began about 1872; profits have decreased in every branch except potatoes; land in our district is as good as 30 years ago, and produces as much cereal. Our farms grow wheat, $6\frac{1}{2}$ quarters per

833

**State of
Agriculture**
—continued.

acre in good years, 5 is an average. We have very little grass moorland for sheep. In Aberdeenshire much ground has been turned to grass for which some is not suitable, and much is practically derelict. We mainly rely on the English market for our potatoes. We send most stuff by water at very low rates. There is much keener competition with foreign potatoes than formerly and although cost of production is less we are unfairly handicapped in our output of surplus stock. Ware potatoes at the farm fetch 38s. per ton. We send many to America paying a duty of 40s., more than 100 %. America competes with our wheat and other cereals and has the use of our markets for nothing. We are most unsatisfied with those conditions.

Labour.

We have no labour difficulties on our Scotch land which is close to the sea, with fishing villages round us. In Kent we are too near London and cannot get men to stay on our land. They go into the town. The quality of labour there is not so good. We import Scotch labourers who get taken off by brewers, &c., at higher wages. Women workers are very scarce and are not anxious to work on the land.

Wages.

In 1885 wages were £36 with usual perquisites (in Scotland they are paid in money and kind). In 1888 the average was £22; they rose to £44 in 1902; since then they fell to the present average, £39. Women's wages have risen 30 %. All labour has risen slightly but we would not grudge better wages if we got higher prices.

Co-operation.

We have a few co-operative societies of the larger farmers, for supplying manures, feeding stuffs, &c., but the system has not developed. We buy in large quantities better from local merchants.

834

Education.

Our education fits boys for shopkeepers, clerks, &c., and they leave school scarcely knowing the names of agricultural implements. A few hours a week should be given to some simple farm teaching. Despite all the money spent by county councils, &c., our dairy education is extremely defective, but butter experts say that technical education as good as in Denmark could be had here, but our people do not take to it.

**Education in
Denmark.**

In Denmark children up to 10 have ordinary compulsory education. They are then allowed to go as boarders to crofters who take in 2 or more children, sending each to school 2 or 3 days a week, where they receive general teaching, the crofter teaching dairy farming, &c., at home. They are healthier for leaving the towns; they get small wages, 10s. to 30s. a year, and board with the family. The crofters are anxious to have them, parents and children like it and the system works admirably. At 14 they leave school and work on the farms with their parents, or hire themselves out to farmers. At 16 to 18 they often go to high schools, girls in summer and boys in winter. They board there and learn history, geography, English, &c. Then they pass to the technical agricultural colleges which have experimental stations. They remain 6 or 12 months, and smart boys who want to qualify for Government positions as experts may, however poor, obtain means for entering the Copenhagen Agricultural College. From 18 to 40 technical education is given at the dairy schools with admirable results. In high schools scholars live as one family. The system gives them a love for their country and a desire to help each other. Country schoolmasters can give farmers in harvest time all their boarders if required. Farmers can always ask for extra boys for a day, it is left to the schoolmaster who generally pleases the farmers without neglecting the boy's education.

835

Danish Methods.

Besides bounties for education the Government gives £15,540 to the Esbjerg Steamship Company for carrying produce here cheaply. All farmers can have a telephone for 15s. to £2 2s. a year. The Government's London agents telegraph to Copenhagen, and by telephone within an hour or two the smallest farmer in Denmark can know London prices and whether to hold back for a better market. Cattle are mostly tethered when out. Danish butter is excellent and commands the market everywhere, its fixed quality is through being made in big factories. In England it is made in small quantities and the quality varies, but in some parts we have adopted the Danish system of butter making. They are more careful than we as to cow's food and how much butter fat is in the milk. Their system is not applicable to my part of Scotland. Much of the success of Danish agriculture is due to Government assistance. A Government expert in any branch of farming and forestry will be sent on the farmer paying the fare from Copenhagen; the expert lives with the farmer, superintends tree planting, &c., directs how land is to be drained, &c. Expert bookkeepers go through the farmer's books, telling him, if any, and what profit he has made; they go to the farm every 8 or 10 weeks, checking the entries taking away a copy, in case of fire. The expert finds how much milk each cow is giving, takes away samples, and sends an analysis advising the farmer on each cow and as to breeding, &c. That system is 16 years old and has increased the milk supply 30 %. Experts when testing cows examine with tuberculin supplied free by Government. Farmers are anxious to have their cows examined. Professor Bang of Copenhagen has tables giving 12 years results of tuberculosis elimination. In one of many herds experimented on at first 97 % reacted to the tuberculin test. The farmer was recommended to put away those cows, and assisted with money, to start with the sound 3 %. Professor Bang examined them every year, and every cow which reacted was sold or isolated. This herd and others have been free from tuberculosis for several years. If a breeder has a specially good bull the Government gives him a premium for its visits to other districts. The Government poultry experts mark the hens laying most eggs and these are the fowls bred from. By writing to Government farmers can obtain a bull of good milking strain, eggs of selected strain or other expert service, at a nominal price. In Denmark sanitary laws are not strict—but sufficient because the collecting vans take away the milk immediately. In the field the cans are carried down the rows of cows to the cart at the end. In the byre the cart stands at the door.

836

Local Rates.

Rates in Scotland: 1894 were 1s. 4d., 1895 1s. 10½d., 1896 2s. 3d., 1897 (the first year of the Rating Act) 11d., 1898 1s. 1d., 1899 1s. 0½d., 1900 8½d., 1901 1s. 1d., 1902 10d., 1903 1s., and 1904 10½d. per acre. Registration rate is ½d., Education 1s. or 1s. 0½d., and Poor Rate 9½d. in the £. They are not excessive.

**Annual Outgoings.
Duties.**

Labour depends on the potatoes grown: maximum £3., rent 31s. per acre.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would benefit us, but his figures are too low to be of much advantage. They should be much higher. We want a tax on imported fat cattle and some supervision to prevent them being sold as home-fed when killed here. A 10 % duty on cattle would help us by raising prices. We make very little on cattle feeding at present. Feeding cattle should be taxed higher than store. All the large millers are on the coast because of foreign wheats, but a tax on flour would make the country flour trade prosperous. We should

get at our doors fresh bran and feeding stuffs for cattle; now we only get very bad foreign bran. Land would be held on a sounder basis; landlords nowadays grudge spending money on steadings. The labourer would not be hurt by increased prices of his food. We should get additional profit sufficient to give the labourer 1s. or more per week. He would demand more and the farmers would give it.

WITNESS No. 162.

MR. RICHARD STRATTON

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Newport, Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire).

I farm 750 acres in Monmouthshire, and have a large shorthorn herd. I grow 100 acres of corn, keep sheep and grow garden produce, such as potatoes, etc. The bulk of it is grass land. I have only 150 acres of arable. In Gloucestershire I farm about 1,550 acres, grow about 300 acres of corn and keep a large number of cattle and sheep, most of which I feed and fatten out. I buy some stores, but principally depend upon my own rearing.

Monmouthshire has suffered from the bad times perhaps less than most other counties. I attribute this to the fact that we are in a very populous district, with a good market close at hand for all kinds of produce, and no heavy railway rates to interfere. The number of sheep in the country has decreased by something like 4 or 5 millions during the last 5 years. This is partly due to the general low prices of corn and produce, which tended to throw land out of cultivation and into grass. A larger head of stock can undoubtedly be kept under a mixed system of cultivation than if the land is all grass. Sheep and cattle farming combined are very much better than either singly. Land stocked entirely with sheep for any length of time becomes "sick of sheep," and they deteriorate until they cannot be kept at all. Mixed stock are the best. The most remunerative branch of farming in Gloucestershire of late years is stock rearing, corn growing the least. This is a very prosperous season. Last year was one of the most disastrous on record. Things are now settling down to the altered conditions and farmers are just making a fair living.

Personally I have had no difficulty as to supply or quality of labour. Labourers are much fewer and much better paid than formerly. In Gloucestershire I am on the Cotswolds. We have laid down a good deal of the land, and the amount of wages paid in that district now is not $\frac{1}{4}$ of that paid 40 years ago. In Monmouthshire wages were high when I started, and they are high now, but I have not altered for 40 years. Wages generally have risen, but I have been able to maintain the same rate for so many years chiefly because I have plenty of good cottages with suitable gardens. My people live near enough to the works and pits and towns to see and to understand that the agricultural labourer, with 15s. a week and a house free, is better off than the town worker. In other parts of the country, especially where there are no cottages, there has been a rise of wages, and great difficulty in getting labourers, but in Monmouthshire, if I require more labour, I have only to put a notice in the papers and I get plenty of applicants, mostly from the industrial districts. I pay 15s. a week wages, with cottage and garden free, equivalent to 2s. or 2s. 6d. more, or a higher wage without the house. Though higher than the East Anglian rate, it is not above the standard of the district for the past 40 years. I pay wages all through harvest with £1 extra, instead of beer, and the same for haymaking, but nothing beyond. The men, however, get piece work in summer. Our regular wage, with these two bonuses, comes to the same thing as the Eastern Counties pay of £7 with suspension of wages. In a long harvest the labourer suffers greatly by exchanging so many weeks' wage for a fixed sum. I reckon that in Monmouthshire the wages, everything told, reach nearly £1 a week with privileges of one kind and another.

There always has been a lack of cottages in the agricultural districts of Monmouthshire, in Gloucestershire there is a surplus. For the last 20 years the single men have gravitated towards the towns, and stuck less to the land than formerly. I have no boy on my Monmouthshire farm. With more cottages the position would be more favourable, but little or nothing is being done to increase the cottages in Monmouthshire except by some intelligent and wealthy landlords, such as my own. They would not pay for the mere rent, but as an advantage to the farmer they would pay, for with more cottages the land would be worth more. Wherever cottages for agricultural labourers are to be built in the districts that I know most about, the local authorities insist upon plans being sent to them, and will not allow thatched or wooden cottages on the ground of risk of fire. Beyond that, so long as the accommodation is fairly good, they do not interfere.

My people are well educated, but if agriculture were taught in the schools the children would dislike it all the days of their life. My good men, whether educated or not, are one as good as the other. As to general agricultural education by the County Councils of Monmouthshire and Gloucestershire, good is being done, and general agricultural education to the farmer should be encouraged.

A Co-operative Society near Beckford in Gloucestershire appears to be doing good work, but the difficulties of co-operation exceed the advantages, and I do not look to much improvement in the future from its development. A large buyer or seller can do just about as well for himself, but it might be of advantage to the smaller occupiers.

Local rates are heavy and increasing, and farmers think they are levied on a wrong basis. The Education Rate is not settled yet in Monmouthshire, but in Gloucestershire 6d. will probably cover it.

But for the Agricultural Rates Act the local rates would have been more burdensome. Speaking roughly the money out of the farmer's pocket for rates is certainly not more now or not quite so much as it was before that Act was passed.

State of
Agriculture.

Labour.
Wages.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Education.

Co-operation.

Local Rates.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

841 **Railway Rates.**

I make no complaint as to railway rates in Monmouthshire. I understand they are high compared with foreign rates but, on the whole, we are not treated unfairly or badly. In fact the higher the rates the better we like them, because we can take straight to the consumer and those at a distance cannot, i.e., heavy railway rates prevent competition.

Annual Outgoings.

In Monmouthshire three items, rent, labour and artificial manure and feeding stuffs, are about the same, viz., about £1 an acre; rates about 3s. 6d. in the £. In Gloucestershire the rent is 10s. to 12s., the labour 10s., feeding stuffs and artificial manures 10s. an acre; rates 2s. 6d. in the £.

Methods.

There cannot be much alteration in the general system of farming. Farmers are using labour-saving machinery. Labour is reduced to a minimum and they will be very reluctant to increase the bill. They would rather do with fewer labourers and good ones and pay them well, than have inferior and underpaid hands. A paper of mine on "Economy of Cultivation" appeared in the Royal Agricultural Society's Journal 20 years ago. I there pointed out that our implements were too heavy and our horses too big and too slow, that the men should be encouraged to ride their implements, instead of dragging their heavy boots. With a double furrow plough and double horses there is economy, and a man can ride those implements on heavy land as well as on light. With lighter horses and lighter implements the men would do much more in the day than under the existing system, and that would be an absolute gain. The foreigner undoubtedly has a great advantage over us in this respect. Efficiency and economy would be carried a step further if on large farms steam was largely employed.

842

Duties.

The general prosperity of the country resulting from increased employment caused by a duty on foreign goods must affect the farmer, inasmuch as the people in the towns would have more money to spend. I do not expect very much advantage. It is perhaps rather a strong assumption that prices will rise in consequence of these duties, and if a rise took place, it is by no means certain that it would be paid by the consumer though it would benefit the farmer. Price depends on supply and demand and, as the supply would be ample, it is probable that the price of wheat and meat would not be affected.

Effect on Labourer.

If we continue as we are, the position of the labourer will become worse, whereas if Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were carried, it would remain as good as it is now. He cannot be persuaded that these duties will benefit him directly, and he must be shewn that, unless something of the kind is done, severe competition will make it impossible for the farmer to continue to pay the present wages. I pay 2s. 6d. a day, and am hardly likely to give an increase so long as there is competition for the work. It is entirely a question of supply and demand, but assuming a greater demand for labour, the additional gain derived from the duties would enable me to increase wages by 1d. or 2d. a day, and, as the farmers prosper their men will prosper with them, but it must be remembered that wages at the present moment are high as compared with the prices of agricultural produce. There are more people out of employment at the present moment throughout the country than I have ever known, and any number of hands can be got at a day's notice from London or any big town. There are organisations for planting out Londoners in agricultural districts and if this pressure continues, the price of agricultural labour must go down. The effect of Mr. Chamberlain's propositions would be to increase employment in the manufacturing districts, and thus take off this pressure from the agricultural labour market. The price of wheat has no effect whatever upon labour. Canada, America, New Zealand and Australia have the highest wages of any countries. There bread and meat must be cheaper than elsewhere, and that alone proves that the price of bread and the price of meat does not affect wages, there is no ground for the statement that a duty of 1s. or 2s. a quarter on wheat will affect the labourer in this country. In France and Germany duties on wheat vary from 8s. to 12s. a quarter, but bread is no dearer than it is here.

843

Effect on Dairying.

I think there is ample room in this country for an increase of dairying among small farmers with whom co-operative dairying is possible. If the effect of the proposed duties was to somewhat increase the price of dairy produce, the industry would develop considerably, especially as the facilities for transport, motor traffic, etc., are increasing. This again should create a great demand for small holdings within reasonable distance of large towns, and a great increase of agricultural occupation would follow, which should be encouraged by every means.

Preference.

Preferential arrangements with the Colonies would not necessitate any change in my system of farming nor would a duty of 2s. on grain have a sufficient effect to alter the general system. An extensive return to corn farming could only be brought about by a much larger duty which would be absurd at the present moment. The country would not have it, and if wanted, the demand had better come from the labourer; he is the chief factor in the case and the one who is going to gain by it. The prices of wheat and meat are not likely to rise in consequence of the proposed duty. Wheat can now be grown cheaper in Canada than anywhere else, certainly cheaper than in the States. With a preferential advantage over all countries except our own Colonies, American farmers as well as our emigrants will naturally go to Canada and become British subjects and consumers of British manufactured articles—a direct gain to the Empire. There is no fear of our being short of wheat or meat in this country. The effect of the tariff would be that we should get wheat from our Colonies instead of from America and Russia, and that would be an advantage. If we cease to be a manufacturing country and operatives have no employment, the consequences would be very grave. By some means or other the manufacturers must be kept going, and if a moderate duty will have that effect it seems to be the most economical way of bringing it about.

844

Bounty.

Corn farming will not become general under a price of 40s. a quarter for wheat. A bounty system is neither practical nor possible. The only remedy for our present dependence upon the foreigner is storage at Government expense. Bounties to farmers for keeping wheat in stack are impracticable because of the loss of at the least 10 to 15 % per annum on wheat in stack. A bounty on acreage grown is worse, we should be paying for half crops.

Mr. Chamberlain's scheme cannot hurt the farmer and may benefit him, but I doubt very much if it is going to make much difference to him.

MR. J. WILLINGTON

(Farmer, Grazier and Breeder, St. Kierans, Birr., Co. Tipperary).

I am prepared to give evidence on sheep feeding, dairying and horse breeding. I farm 1,150 statute acres in 4 farms—3 of 250 to 320 acres each being grass and the other of 280 acres being given up to tillage and dairying. I plough about 80 acres each year.

The general condition of agriculture in the district is very poor. The farms are small holdings of 15 to 50 acres, and farmers are entirely dependent on tillage and are in a very poor way. Store cattle have been our mainstay for the last few years, thanks to the exclusion of Canadian stores. The small farmers are all barley growers and for years the yield of barley has been declining. The land is really worked out through growing barley one year, and a poor crop of turnips or potatoes the next, and not manuring properly. Last year the average was only 10 barrels to the Irish acre, or about 6 to the statute acre. It is good enough quality for Guinness. I have known it sell at 9s. a barrel in a bad year, but last year it went up to 14s. 6d. Dairying has paid best recently, but it is getting worse now that the foreign competition in butter is beginning to tell. Sheep have paid very well for the last 2 years, but a good many people had given them up in my neighbourhood. The price of wool has also risen, the coarser wools being affected by the demand for blankets by Russia and Japan. With the exception of sheep, nothing paid last year. Even stores fell greatly in price. I am sorry to say I have not given up horse breeding. It does not pay. I have been trying to breed what will make a hunter, but very few of them do. The misfits are too many. If they only go as troopers the price the farmer gets is too small.

State of
Agriculture.

846

Profits have fallen more than 50 % since 1879. On looking over my father's stock book I find that on one farm which we held in fee before 1879 his profits were from £700 to £800 gross. That same farm makes now from £300 to £350 gross. 20 years ago barley made 16s. a barrel (16 stone) easily; now the average price is 13s. 6d. per barrel. The fall in prices is due to foreign competition.

Profits.

We are well situated as regards labour, it is scarcer, but there is still enough to be had if the prices of farm produce would allow of a fair wage being paid all the year round. The labourers complain of want of employment in my neighbourhood more than anything else, and that is the reason so many of them are emigrating. We are draining a river, and all last winter men walked 6 Irish miles night and morning to get work at 3d. an hour, so as to have all the money to bring home. If there was employment in the neighbourhood they would not walk that distance.

Labour.

The rate of wages of the labourers has gone up about 20 %, and if the labourers are to be kept in the country we must pay higher wages; but the prices of farm produce do not allow of that.

Wages.

With wheat there has been a gradual fall in price since a few years after the repeal of the Corn Laws, but beef and mutton were not affected in price till 1879 when frozen meat began to come over. The effect of this fall in prices and competition has been to put a quantity of land out of cultivation and into grass. There is no employment for labour, drains and water courses are neglected, so that even much grass land is deteriorating. A great deal of land in my neighbourhood is let by the 11 months, so as to be free from the effect of the Act of 1881. Under those circumstances the tenant gets all he can out of it, and the land deteriorates every year. The landlord gets his money for the 11 months and generally spends it out of the country. Nobody ever trims a ditch or cleans a drain or does anything. It is a lamentable state of affairs. This land is fed with store cattle. They get nothing except the grass and hay. They never get cake.

Causes of Change.

847

There are a good many agricultural co-operative societies. I am hon. secretary for one through which I get nearly all my seeds and manures. We have no societies for selling anything except butter. We are starting a bacon-curing factory in Roscrea. We are only at the preliminary stages at present. The farmers are guaranteeing taking so much in £1 shares, half of which is to be called in, and then we are going to the Bank to get a loan. There is to be a call of 5s. when we begin to build, and another 5s. when we are putting in the machinery and then we go to the Bank and borrow the balance.

Co-operation.

Agricultural education has borne no fruit yet, and I fear will only affect the next generation.

Education.

Many cottages have been built for labourers, but I am opposed to them because they are most uncomfortable and unsanitary. There is a kitchen 15 ft. by 14 ft., and 2 miserable little bedrooms 9 ft. by 7 ft. 6 ins., and that is all the accommodation. A family of any size cannot live in that with any comfort, but the District Councils will not build bigger ones. The rooms are all on the ground floor. £30 more would raise the house sufficiently to put 2 rooms upstairs, and have the kitchen and 1 room downstairs. That would be a decent house, but the District Council will not listen to it. They cost £150 with a turf house and a piggery, and the fencing.

Cottage
Accommodation.

848

We are paying about the same in rates and taxes as we were before the Act was passed doing away with the Grand Juries. The agricultural grant has been swallowed up and gives no relief—we are about where we were. I take a pessimistic view of the condition of agriculture in the country and can only suggest as a remedy taxation of foreign produce.

Local Rates.

I approve of the proposals made by Mr. Chamberlain, except that they do not go quite far enough. I fear the duties are too small to do any good. They would not affect the producer, especially if Colonial produce came in free. If Colonial produce was taxed 5 % and foreign produce 15 % it would do some good, but nothing less will.

Duties.

The proposals are in favour of the labourer. If my farm produce rose in price 5 %, and the cost of living was increased by that amount, I could pay my labourers 10 % more wages and have a profit, provided there was no tax put on cotton seed and linseed. I made it my business to go round among my workmen and make

Effect on Labour.

849 Effect on Labour
—continued.

enquiries to find how much tea and sugar was used for every cwt. of flour they bought. They all bake their own bread. I found that there were from 3½ to 4 lbs. of tea and from 12 to 16 lbs. of sugar consumed for every cwt. of flour. From their weekly consumption of food they would be actually gainers by Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. They seem to understand that, and are not opposed to the duties, but they do not care very much about expressing an opinion because they are waiting to see what their leaders are going to order. Individually they are in favour of the scheme, but collectively I do not know what they are going to do.

WITNESS No. 164.**Breeding.****MR. THOMAS M. BARKER**

(Cattle Rearer and Farmer, Coolboy House, Tinahely, County Wicklow).

I farm 234 Irish acres, and my business is tillage and stock raising. Land in my neighbourhood is not what could be termed grass land, although some of it has not been tilled for upwards of 50 years, and some much longer.

850 State of Agriculture.

Agriculture is not so profitable as it was years ago. The condition of the land itself is bad; the fences are broken down and the drains are blocked. Labour is too dear to keep the fences up and the drains in proper order, and its dearness and scarcity have affected the general character of the cultivation. Tillage is decreasing principally on this account. I never keep pigs, but fatten cattle on turnips, pollard, oil and cottonecake mixed half and half, and barley, when it is cheap. Two years ago I twice bought spoiled barley at 8s. 6d. per barrel. At this price it is cheaper than any other feeding stuff. We breed saddle and van horses, a mixed sort, and our best market for them is Enniscorthy or Castle Dermot. We sell them at 4-5 and up to 7 years old. I have got as much as £40 for 5 year olds. Most of the farmers have sufficient horse-power, but instead of keeping the best they sell them, leaving all unsound and unfit ones to work and breed from and even they are not fed, as most little farmers sell all their corn, and have none for horses, consequently work gets behind, crops are not put in at the right time and hence are bad; neither are they manured enough, for the people will not go to the trouble of collecting any, or sufficient, litter to bed their stock. Stock raising could be made to pay 30 % better by securing the best breed of cattle, bulls, &c., and keeping for breeding purposes the best mares and cows, and after some 10 or 15 years would become very remunerative. The larger farmer has suffered the most, as in all cases he has to pay all the labour he employs on the farm. I have no sheep at present. My land got sheep-sick; I lost 75 in one year and sold the rest. I breed shorthorns now; I used to have Polled Angus. The nearest vegetables that are grown are in Coollattin Garden, for the supply of the house; any surplus is sent to Dublin to the markets. We have very few apple orchards, as before the apples were half ripe they would be all stolen. The nearest market is Dublin. One cannot get a good price in the country. Prices are lower than formerly. Beef has fallen, mutton is cheaper. Years ago my father used often to get £3 10s. a cwt. for beef. The price of oats has gradually fallen. My father often got 15s. or 16s. a barrel of 14 stones (that is kept for a year, and threshed out before the new came in); and he has had as much as 17s. 6d. We grew some barley then, but hardly any wheat. Barley has fallen in the same proportion as oats. My father often cleared the whole year's rent of the farm out of a field of 14 acres. Barley or wheat was selling for £1 a barrel; it is not now bringing within 20 % to 30 % as much, and mutton and beef sold at 9d. and 10d., and even more per lb. At that time the best workmen could be procured for half present wages. The fall in prices and the rise in labour have not been compensated for by reduced rents. A temporary reduction of 15 % 20 years ago was made permanent later, and under the operation of the last Act we had a like reduction. The 15 % on my farm came to £31 a year, and when it was sold, £31 more was taken off, i.e., we have had a reduction of 30 %.

Labour.

Labour is the greatest difficulty we have to contend with. Farm labour is deteriorating every day; the old well-trained hands are nearly all dead or beyond their labour, and the young people are in most cases above working with a farmer, and would prefer going into some town or city, perhaps to starve, and a good many of them appear to have taken to drink. My father 25 years ago employed 22 hands. Wages since then have almost doubled, and since the 30 % reduction of rent have gone up 10 or 15 %.

852 Cottage Accommodation.

We have sufficient cottage accommodation in nearly all cases now. Numbers of good cottages are already built in this and the adjoining Unions, and let to workmen at about 10d. or 1s. a week. In some parts they are vacant, because the tenants were too lazy to keep them or pay rent. In our locality they pay, with few exceptions.

Education.

The Agricultural Department has sent lecturers round for the last couple of years, and some good has been done, but the farmers will still have their opinion about the way to farm—the practical way. They would not go by what these lecturers say in most cases.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent £175, labour about £130, feeding stuffs £50, manure £15, machinery, &c., £20, rates £30 a year.

Co-operation.

No co-operative society has been established nearer than Enniscorthy. They were about to start one in Shillelagh, but did not.

There is not a weighbridge for selling and buying store cattle in our country. Some people would not get a living so well if we had one, though the farmers would like it, as the blockers and jobbers would not get so much if cattle were sold by weight.

Foreign Stores.

If foreign cattle were let in the little farmers would be nearly ruined. I am opposed to the free admission of stores into the interior of the country.

WITNESS No. 165.

853

MR. WILLIAM H. BARTON

(Cattle Raiser and Farmer, Ballyline House, Callan, Kilkenny).

I occupy 458 acres—20 in tillage, 60 in meadow and 378 pasture. We breed shorthorns and Polled Angus. We generally buy young stock, but rear some calves with milk.

State of
Agriculture.

Farmers find it hard to live, they are making little profits and living in a poor way. They were well off until 1879, since then there has been a downward tendency. Reductions in rent through the Land Commission are not adequate to the reductions in prices of produce. Years ago beef sold at £4 per cwt. dead weight, in 1888 I got £3, now I cannot get £2 10s. We average 1 beast to 3 acres. We formerly got £5 profit each beast per year—£3 is usual now. This fall is caused by imports of cattle and corn—we are in direct competition with countries that have free land. The effect is that farmers make their budget balance by stinting labour, manures and feeding stuffs in order to keep within their smaller incomes.

The best labourers go away because they get better wages in America and the inferior remain. There is greater difficulty in getting labourers.

Labour.

Wages have increased slightly. If prices were better the rate of wages would increase more.

Transport from here to England costs almost as much as from America.

Co-operative creameries have been started all over the country.

Lecturers and instructors from the Agricultural Department have been of service, and there are improvements effected by breeds of cattle being developed and sent through the country.

Wages.
Railway and
Shipping Rates.
Co-operation.
Education.

854

The want of labour cannot be ascribed to want of cottage accommodation—there are many cottages, several erected in recent years.

Cottage
Accommodation.
Foreign Methods.

In America they use more machinery and their farms are better suited for it, having been laid out square.

There is a slight relief to taxation under the Local Government Act and a little off tithe rent charge, but income tax has increased. Before the Local Government Act was passed (3 years ago) rates were levied differently. There were town rates and country rates, and the best situated portions paid highest rates. In Callan where the rate was 3s. they had numerous poor and could get any extra hands wanted. Living in a backward district near Callan I paid only 1s. rate. I could not get my provisions and labour so easily. Now both districts are rated alike. People should be rated according to the expenditure in the district. The Government are paying $\frac{1}{2}$ the tenant's poor rate and $\frac{1}{2}$ the landlord's county tax, but by Union rating some get all and others no relief.

Local Rates.

I have farms at 15s. and 13s. rent, and grazing land 45s., including rent, taxes and herding, per acre per year.

Annual Outgoings. 855

Duties are now on the wrong articles, such as tea and tobacco which we never grow, and things we can produce are let in free. Duties should be put on the latter and principally on articles not allowing a margin for profit here (such as finished beef, flour, and manufactured articles) to protect home industry. A slight duty on wheat and a higher duty on flour would encourage our millers, and farmers and manufacturers would have an incentive to work and employ more labour, and with the increased demands the price of labour should go up. Dead meat or cattle ready to be killed should pay highest duty, but a beast to be kept for a year should pay less. There should be a small tax on lean cattle and a larger one on fat cattle—beef or mutton. We should not allow cattle free from the States and exclude Canada. Butter should be taxed. A tax on foreign bacon would help our own supply, but being greatly a food of the people should be taxed very slightly. Beef is more a luxury.

Duties.

WITNESS No. 166.

856

MR. TOM CASSWELL

(Farmer, Breeder and Grazier, Pointon House, near Folkingham, Lincolnshire).

I am principally engaged in arable farming and grazing and in breeding, particularly sheep and cattle. The size of my holding is about 800 acres, of which 320 is permanent pasture; and then I sow down annual grasses. I keep as much stock as I can on that. I have about 30 acres in potatoes, but our land is not quite suitable for these. The greater part of the land is heavy, and the main crop used to be wheat; but wheat does not now pay for cultivation, and we grow anything we can. Mine is a good farm, but this has been a very bad season, the worst since the wet season about 1878. This year it has grown about 3 quarters of wheat and oats to the acre and 1 quarter of beans at 28s. In an ordinary fair average year I get from 4 to 5 quarters of wheat, and in a good year for oats I never get more than 7 to 8 quarters.

State of
Agriculture.

I do not do dairying. My stock keeps me going. I have a speciality in sheep. A farmer who has not a speciality has a very poor chance at present prices. My speciality is the regular Lincoln sheep. They are bought off me for exportation all over the world, principally to South America. I keep about 1,000 sheep, and these have paid very well. I also breed shire horses, but not successfully. We have such bad luck that we cannot get on.

857 Profits.

The prices are so bad that arable farming has become very unremunerative, particularly so this year. But there is no particular branch in the ordinary farming that is remunerative. Making a speciality of breeding choice stock is the only chance I see, and a man cannot get to that unless he has been a good many years at it. The big man can make a profit, but the small man cannot. The small men are disappearing; they cannot keep on; if they have no capital they are no good. This year was one of the worst harvests I remember since 1878. The quality is decent, and the price is better than it has been, but only half the price I got in the early days. The change with reference to profits on arable land began in the seventies.

Labour.

We are fairly off for labour, though at times it gets scarce; but I have a good many cottages under my control, and as we are more thickly populated than some parts of Lincolnshire, we get a fair supply. We have extra labour at harvest time; but a large farmer has a much better chance with his labour than a small one. I employ a regular staff of labourers all the year round, whereas small men only want two or three men for a short time, and they cannot get them. The men do not work to their full time readily now, as in the old days. That is a very weak place in farming. They were never better off in their lives than now. They are fully employed, and they get 15s. a week and the extras. All my men earn £1 1s. a week the year round, and perhaps more. They would like to come to work at 7 o'clock and leave at 3; but that does not answer. If I let them the work, which I do as much as I can, they do that. They want to work now about 8 hours a day, whereas they used to work 12 for the same money; and they are not very particular how they do the work.

858 Change in Conditions.

I attribute the change in the condition of agriculture principally to the over-supply of everything from abroad. Consequently, the land has decreased in value about half. I myself pay about 26s., where I used to pay 48s. an acre, and I could make money at 48s., and I lose money at 26s. That is the position of arable land. The sheep maintain their price very fairly. A lot of the land that was used for wheat growing, and has been thrown out of cultivation, is now barren. I know a lot of strong land in a district near to where I live which was sown down to permanent pasture; but it never became permanent pasture. It is fit for nothing. It will not do for temporary crops for two or three months' ley. There is nothing to graze, and it is expensive seeding.

Railway Rates.

We suffer from railway rates, and are under a considerable disadvantage in comparison with our foreign competitors. Produce is carried from America to Liverpool and by rail to London for less money than my produce is carried by rail half the distance, without the cost by sea. I know that the railway companies say they cannot afford to do it for less, and that they are rated heavily; but I think if they exercised more economy they might carry our stuff at less cost.

If they would lower the rates there would be half as much more carried. I should often send stock by railway instead of walking it, as I do, 20 or 30 miles. There may be some difficulty in reducing railway rates; but it would serve our purpose if they equalised the rates by raising them on the foreign produce. This is one of the great difficulties we have to contend with, because it affects everything. We bring a great deal of stuff home, such as manure, feeding stuffs, cakes, &c. The extra carriage all falls on us, because, if we buy it from the manufacturer, he puts it on the price. The railway people could be a little more obliging, and not delay the stock. My experience is that it does not matter whether you tender them 5 tons or 500 tons, you cannot get a lower rate at present.

859

Co-operation.

I send my potatoes in 5 or 10 tons at a time, and I could not send 100 tons without going all round to my neighbours, and that is a thing we should not have to do. Besides, I do not see how it is practicable. We do not want to sell all our potatoes at the same time. How are we going to get the stuff together? Nothing whatever has been done in respect of co-operation in buying and selling, and I am not in favour of anything being done so far as cattle and sheep are concerned. Practical men are very much against that. I prefer my own judgment.

Education.

The boys are over-educated, and if we get a sharper boy than the rest, he goes to the towns. The education is simply ridiculous for an agricultural boy. They are kept at school too long. They can do their day's work and then get a good education in the evening. The subjects taught should be agricultural, and suited to the work in which they are engaged. I do not think 11 is too early to allow the children to leave school. If a boy is delicate I would not take him away; but if he is strong and healthy, he is a good boy at 11. I would quite approve of more liberty being given to school managers to release children at certain times of the year when their labour is especially valuable. Speaking as a manager of a school, I may say we have exercised that power. Instead of giving the whole holiday at harvest time we reserved a part for the potato-picking, when the boys are particularly useful.

860

Cottage Accommodation.

We are very well situated as regards cottage accommodation. We have very good cottages, and consequently I am very well supplied with labour. There is a great deficiency in cottages as a rule, because as one gets out of condition and is condemned by the sanitary authorities, and has to be pulled down, it is not replaced. All the cottages that belong to small men are never replaced. In my own parish we have probably 20 or 30 cottages less than we had 40 years ago. They are not replaced, because building has become so expensive that a cottage cannot be built to rent at less than £6.

Local Rates.

Local rates and taxes are increasing very much. This is due to the County Councils and the District Councils. They are large bodies, and have a good deal of money to handle, and they generally spend it rather more freely than small bodies would. It is not always the right men who get on to these Boards. The practical men will not go, so we get men with about 40 acres of land, men with practically nothing at stake, and these spend the money freely. The Agricultural Rates Act reduced the rates, but others pull it up, and we are no better off. Some men pay more than they used to do.

I understand that the additional rate under the Education Act is to be 3d. in the pound; but I would not be surprised if it were 5d. or 5½d.

Agricultural Rates Act.

The farmer got the benefit of the Agricultural Rates Act. I have not heard of a landlord taking advantage of it. The Act saves me £35 a year in rates, and I am anxious that it should be renewed.

Labour represents about 30s. an acre of the outgoings. That is very heavy, as I have a lot of grass, and the labour is principally on the arable. Feeding stuffs run to about 20s. an acre, and is another very heavy item. In my case I have a speciality in breeding pedigree stock, and much cake is used, running up the cost. I should think I often pay £800 a year for cake and stuff, which approaches the outlay on labour. I do not use much artificial manure. Machinery is an expensive item. You have to keep renewing your implements. I have spent £150 this year on new implements.

I quite agree with a two shilling duty on corn of all kinds. I should like to see the brewer pay a duty on the maize that he uses. It cuts into our barley trade considerably. I might be in favour of maize being exempted as far as the agricultural interest is concerned, apart from brewing; but if maize came from a country where they had a hostile tariff I should treat it the same as other imports, quite regardless of the effect of the duty on this country. I approve of a corresponding, but somewhat heavier, duty on flour, or on all ground stuff, but I do not think I would agree to a 5 per cent. duty on all meat except bacon. I should let that come free except from those countries hostile to us, and on them I should retaliate to the full extent. As regards the Colonies, I should treat them fairly; but I should not be too lenient. I should like to see all manufactured articles pay a tax, except those named. I have not considered very carefully the proposed duties, but I do not think they would affect us very much. The only benefit that we could get as farmers would be for the Government to get as much duty as they could in the shape of retaliatory tariffs, and with what they reaped in that way relieve our rates and taxes. That is the only point I can see where we, as farmers, can get hold of much. I do not think that a duty of 2s. a quarter would raise the price of my produce one penny; but it would raise a large revenue, and not increase the cost of food to anybody. If we are to derive any benefit from these duties I rather look to their being employed for the purpose of relieving taxation.

Outgoings.

861

Duties.

Effect on Farming Generally.

Effect on Prices.

862

WITNESS No. 167.

MR. W. FRANKISH

(Culme, St. Catherine's, Lincoln).

I farmed on a large scale for about 50 years at Limber in the north of Lincolnshire. I gave up farming 3 years ago. I kept about 1,000 ewes and bred beasts as well. My holding was 2,000 acres, about 400 acres grass and the rest arable. Mine was a wold land farm, and I farmed on the four-course system.

Farming is very different now from the time I began. Rents are reduced very considerably; prices are very much lower, and where I could make money when I began I could make nothing when I left. Corn does not pay at all to grow. When corn was making good prices we farmed very high; but it did not pay to farm highly during the last few years. When I gave up wheat was sometimes under £1 a quarter, sometimes up to 26s. and 27s. I did not sell at £1 a quarter, I simply ground it up and used it for stock, instead of buying cake. A good average price for wheat 30 years ago was 50s. to 60s., and 20 years ago 40s. to 45s. The first wheat I sold as a young man 51 years ago, during the Crimean War time, was 88s. a quarter, and I finished at about 24s. I grew corn on about 800 acres. I have grown 6 quarters all round, and one year I had 7 quarters in one field; but I could not get 5 now in the way we are farming. My land was very good barley land and latterly I grew more barley than wheat. Barley has not deteriorated so much as wheat, but it does not pay so well as formerly. During the bad years commencing in 1879, barley was not making much money, and since then the prices have been much lower. Barley certainly is a better average crop for prices than anything else. I have sold barley at 50s. a quarter, and lately a good sample is worth about 30s. in Lincolnshire, not more; and it is selling as low as 24s., and lower than that. Barley is more liable to damage by weather, and that is one reason why we grow more oats than formerly. Sheep have paid better than anything on the farm simply because they produce themselves quickly, and you get them off the farm quickly. We feed them up much quicker than we used to do and sell them younger. Wool had not begun to rise before I gave up farming.

I had a great many cottages and I was very well off for labour. I employed as many men all the year round as I wanted, carpenters, blacksmiths, &c. I had more cottage accommodation than I could fill sometimes, as there were out-lying cottages to which men objected to go. I have nothing to complain of in the way of labour difficulties.

Wages have been practically the same for years. We gave 15s. a week ordinary wages, and then there was the extra work. The wages would come to about 18s. to 20s. a week, with harvest time, and turnip hoeing, &c.

I experienced a very unfortunate change in the general position of agriculture. Rents were greatly lowered. I began this farm by paying on the average 36s. an acre, and I farmed it at 22s. for the last few years. I attribute the change to the low price of corn chiefly.

Railway rates affected us. The railway company in that part of Lincolnshire has a monopoly. To Manchester there is only the Great Central. To London there is also the Great Northern; but you are altogether dependent on these two railways.

Local rates have increased since the District Council was formed. Mine is a large parish of something like 6,000 acres. Before the District Council took over the highways the rates were particularly small, sometimes under 1s., and sometimes 1s. 6d. When the District Council amalgamated the rates throughout the whole district they rose to over 2s. at once. I am bound to say the roads were improved.

The Agricultural Rates Act gave us material relief. I got the whole benefit of that Act, and I never heard of a case in which the advantage of the Act went to the landlord.

State of Agriculture.

863

Prices.

Labour and Cottage Accommodation.

864

Wages.

Rent.

Railway Rates.

Local Rates.

Agricultural Rates Act.

865 Outgoings.

The rent of my farm was 22s. an acre and the labour cost about 26s. I cannot give information with regard to feeding stuffs because the cost varied so from the fact that I very often ground up some corn, which I should not have done if prices had been better. I did not use so much manure during the latter part of the time, because it did not pay to put it on the land. Instead of using about 8 cwt. or half a ton an acre I put in about 4 to 5 cwt. just to sustain the crop. In more recent years the more highly a man farmed the more he lost, particularly in wet seasons. The diminution in high farming was becoming general in the district.

Duties.

I have considered the effect of Mr. Chamberlain's proposed duties, and I advocated precisely the same system 20 years ago. I am convinced that he is right. I would not say the farmer will get direct advantage from the different duties immediately, but if there is better trade throughout the country the farmer is bound to have some advantage from it. In the case of flour, if there is a fair duty mills will be re-opened in the country. This would be a great advantage to the farmer as he could deliver the corn to the mills, and get the offals back without railway expenses. He would gain in the transport, and would get in return a much greater quantity of offals at less cost. In Lincoln there were formerly 8 large mills; now there are 3 and they use nearly as much foreign corn as English. Duties on meat would do more good to the farmer directly than anything else. A 5 per cent. duty would also tend to increase the price of store stock. The duty of 2s. a quarter will not add anything appreciable to the price of corn when sold; but if a farmer were prosperous and could grow better crops far more labour would be required and consequently the price of labour would go up. I can see no other mode of raising the price of labour.

Effect on Milling.

Effect on Stock.

Effect on Labour.

866

Brewers and Barley.

In advocating a tax on foreign barleys it does seem to be placing another tax on the brewers now that they use foreign barleys so largely; but there is hope, from samples I have had before me, that Queensland can and may in future produce barley equal, if not superior, to the bulk of foreign barleys grown either in Europe or elsewhere. These would come to England free from duty. Also these samples have been malted in this country and have proved satisfactory both in the kiln and brewery, and seed barleys have been sent there for further experiment and trial. If Queensland can do this why should not other parts of Australia or other of our Colonies or Canada as well. Of course this does not help the British farmer, but in this case there is freight to help him, contrary to wheat from America.

WITNESS No. 168.

MR. WILLIAM PARLOUR

(Farmer, Croft, near Darlington).

867

My brother and I farm 221 acres near Croft, in the neighbourhood of Darlington. Originally about 4-5ths was arable, but corn growing being so very unremunerative, about half has been laid down to grass. The other is in tillage. We raise sheep, which have done fairly well last year. We breed only draught horses. We both breed and feed stock, but feed more than we breed. We also grow some potatoes.

State of Agriculture.

All corn has been very bad sile of late years. Our barley is not quite such a good quality as in the south. Oats have been a bad price and wheat also. When we first began farming about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the arable land was in wheat each year. Sometimes there is no wheat at all now. Wheat is not absolutely necessary for our rotations; we grow it occasionally for the straw, and for a change of crop. It does better sometimes than other cereals. Stock raising is one of the branches that we have to make money out of at present, but recently it has paid badly; with the exception of sheep and occasionally potatoes, farm produce is very low, and potato growing has been getting worse. The district might grow more if there was a demand for them.

The cattle are weighed before being sold. The weight is marked upon a board, but they are sold by the head afterwards. The butchers always note the weight, and speak of buying one weighing so much for so many pounds; so, although they would say they did not buy by live weight, they are guided by it, and this is a benefit to the farmer.

Unless importation falls off, or something is done to relieve the pressure, I do not see any chance of the recovery of agriculture. Profits have been decreasing lately, particularly the last 2 years. The worst year we ever had was 1904. The change in agriculture is undoubtedly due to severe competition, as shewn by the fall in prices. It was beginning to set in about 30 years ago. I recollect 1879, and the wheat growing in the ear as it stood in the fields. The fall in prices began just about that time.

868

Labour.

Our labour difficulties are the high wages. We do not have trouble with our men, we can get labour at a price, but there is more trouble than there was. About three years ago it was absolutely impossible to get labour; there was none to be had; it did not matter what you paid. There were farmers who had to do without it during the war. The supply does not trouble us now, but the quality has gone off to some extent.

The hours of our labourers are 7 to 5, stopping one hour. Hoeing is done by the acre. We pay about 8s. for singling mangolds, swedes and turnips the first time; it used to be 6s. The men really work hard for this money. Irishmen come over regularly, the same men come to us year after year, and it is generally the Irish labourers who do this. On piece work they are sometimes careless and require looking after 2 or 3 times a day. On turnips it is always piecework for Irishmen except on very rare occasions. At the manure filling and dung carting, they work by the day. Many of them work hard and well. Those that have been brought up to the work stick to it and are tempted by wages, or by associations, to stay. Many of the men live and board in the farmhouse and seem to get attached to a place. If you offer them sufficient they will stay, often for several years. These are fairly good men, but occasional labour is sometimes very inferior; it has been lately. I cannot see any leaning towards an agricultural life in the young men. Most of us are working farmers and if a man drops off, we have to take his place until we can find someone, but we have a difficulty. For

thatching ricks, &c., there is a man who lives in the village near us whom we can hire. One of my neighbours has a very good man who has had about £30 a year and all his board, and now at 30 years of age has saved £300 and has taken a farm of 100 acres upon his own account. I mention this to show that the labourer is not badly off with us.

The best men leave for other work where they can get more money, though the labourers in our district get perhaps as high wages as in any part of England, 17s. and 18s. a week, with a cottage, potatoes and milk, and, in harvest, very often a part of their food and other privileges as well. Wages are above the average because we are in the centre of a manufacturing district and have to compete with manufacturers. 18s. a week is the regular wage for what we call the hinds. On a farm of 220 to 250 acres there would be now one man or a lad less than 25 or 30 years ago. There is an all round reduction in labour to this extent.

There are too few cottages, and there are none being built with the view of getting labourers to live in them. A few landowners are building cottages, to have labourers for themselves near home, but on the isolated farms and in the villages where labourers are wanted cottages are very hard to get.

Railway rates are a great grievance with us. We are a long way from London. We could grow a great many more potatoes and other things than we do, but we seem to be cut off not only from London, but from other large centres of population. The rates are high. It costs about £1 a ton to send potatoes to London. That is prohibitive in a great many cases.

Our agricultural organisation is fair. In Darlington, perhaps 10 years ago, a farmers' auction mart was started for the sale of cattle, which is very successful indeed. Co-operation to get market tolls and railway rates reduced and to obtain market facilities, is fairly general with us. The N.E. Railway made 2 or 3 trifling concessions a few years ago, one was a special rate for 5 ton lots, which saved a little and has been very much taken advantage of. They asked to have our produce put in truckloads and have now organised a system of collecting at central stations where small consignments are made up into truckloads, but even then the rates are so heavy that it prevents our sending to the large centres.

Some farmers club together to buy manures, but there are so many merchants selling in competition that one can buy as cheaply from them as by co-operation. There are co-operative creameries in the sparsely populated districts, but the farmers try to sell direct to the consumer in the manufacturing towns near by. We can easily sell our surplus milk at a fair price. The farmers now are co-operating in Wensleydale close to us, but I do not think there is much to be got out of butter by co-operation.

Something can be done at school to give the youths an interest in the land, if the officials will go the right way to do it. In Darlington we have been trying to get the authorities to formulate a complete system of agricultural education beginning with the elementary schools and going right up, so that anyone who cared to follow it could go as high as he liked. At first our people would not go to Darlington to school. Something is being done in the North Riding of Yorkshire, more I believe than elsewhere in England, but in Durham they are doing practically nothing. I have been trying in conjunction with the Chairman of our Local Education sub-committee to get a system of agricultural education established in the rural elementary schools in the district. I think we may be able to do so within a short time. The Durham County Council were late in taking up the work. They should have special school books referring to agricultural pursuits and, if possible, practical demonstration plots, but the difficulty will be with the teachers.

Our rent is 18s. an acre (it has been reduced to about one half since we started), labour 25s., feeding stuffs 10s., manure 10s., machinery 2s., rates and taxes 2s. in the £ (quite 2s. 6d. when the Education Rate is levied.)

I assume that this is not a protective scheme, but one to foster general trade with the Colonies, for it would not be accepted if it was not. If we could get some arrangement that would put us more upon an equal footing with the foreigner we should be better satisfied. We feel that foreign produce is being brought to market much more cheaply than our own, and if the money raised went to pay some of the taxes now paid by the land, and if we had lower rates to get our produce more cheaply to market we should reap a certain amount of benefit without doing anyone any harm. A policy of protection would not be favourably received in my district. Agricultural labourers, at any rate, are not afraid of the dear loaf. All those among them that think understand how it is that the land is going out of cultivation.

A duty of 2s. per quarter on foreign corn would do good, but it must not be a hard and fast rule to put 2s. on everything. I would not tax maize without careful consideration. Maize is being more used every year for cattle food and in Ireland for the food of the poor. It is a question whether cotton seed should be exempt or not. All those things that we do not produce in England should be carefully considered before being taxed and, although I favour a 2s. per quarter duty, each must be considered on its merits. So much flour being manufactured abroad, we lose the offals and I suggest a heavier duty on flour. We have 2 or 3 companies buying on local markets now where we used to have 20 or 30 single millers. A great deal of the corn that we grow in this country is only feeding stuff.

I see no objection whatever to a 5 % duty on meat excepting Colonial, and on dairy produce. I do not think it matters whether more tax is put on live meat than on dead, or *vice versa*.

WITNESS No. 166.

MR. MARK SANDFORD

(Farmer and Breeder, Estate Office, Maresfield Park, Uckfield, representing the Sussex County Agricultural Society).

I farm about 650 acres. During the past 18 years I have laid down about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the arable to permanent pasture. Our soil is a sandy loam, very sandy most of it. I am a considerable breeder of stock of all sorts.

Wages.

Cottages.

Railway Rates.

Co-operation.

Education.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

We have a pedigree herd of Sussex cattle, and also South Down sheep. We graze all our cattle and sell as much fat stock, cattle and sheep, as possible. We have not many hops. The land is hardly strong enough for good hop land, but it makes a little work for the women and children in the villages, and that is one reason why we grow them. We have from 6 to 10 acres only.

State of Agriculture.

I manage Count Alexander Munster's Maresfield Park estate. It is a very large property, between 3,000 and 4,000 acres. The fall in prices has caused all the best farmers to give up. The men with capital, and the men who farm best have almost all gone out of farming in our district, and their farms (300 or 400 acres) have, many of them, been cut up. There can be no doubt that the fall in the price of wheat is the cause of all the change. Much land about here is more suitable for wheat growing than anything else. Alternate wheat, corn, green crops and roots produce much more meat per acre, as well as corn, than the land sown down to grass, half farmed and producing poor crops as now. This change began in 1870 or even earlier. Cattle and sheep pay best. In order to compete with the foreigner you must produce the best possible cattle and the best possible sheep. They are all South Downs on our estate.

We do not grow barley. The land is not suitable. We grow good oats sometimes, good in quantity and quality, when properly farmed.

Wheat.

Farmers would grow wheat if they could get 40s. a quarter, and if there was any prospect of it sticking at 40s. I should very soon break up some of our pasture. Ten years ago corn was worse than it actually is now. We were then selling our wheat at 22s. and 23s. a quarter. Now it is nearly 30s. Although England produces a larger average crop of corn than any other country with oftentimes a poorer natural soil, thereby proving that English methods are the best, corn here, especially wheat, has long been grown at an actual money loss; but since the acreage of wheat has been so largely reduced, the increased price of straw has somewhat lessened this loss. It is a temptation to a needy farmer to sell the straw which should be used on the farm. The straw is sometimes more valuable than the corn itself. With the improved price of straw wheat will just pay its expenses and a very little more.

English Methods Best.

Straw.

Hay.

As a rule we have not much hay to sell and prices are not good, but these last two years we have had good hay crops and at present I have a year and a half's growth by me, whereas sometimes we have had to buy.

Small Farms.

In managing this estate the only way I could find tenants, was by cutting up the farms into small ones of 30 to 50, or 100 acres. That means finding a good deal of fresh capital for putting up new buildings and keeping them in repair. Occasionally a fresh house is required, but it is very singular that these small farmers will put up with almost anything in the shape of a cottage if they get decent farm buildings, which probably accounts for our being able to get and demand a bigger rent for these small places.

Poultry Farming.

The poultry industry is the entire living of a great many who do nothing else, and it seems to be the one thing which they cannot over produce. It can hardly be called farming. They do not feed pork for the London market, but keep a cow or two, partly for the sake of the skimmed milk with which to mix up the poultry food. 30 acres is about the size of farm our tenants require. If farms were cut down to 20, 10 or 5 acres, it would be rather too small. I can let 25 to 40 acres, and an industrious family can manage this without much help. It must be all grass, no arable. In Sussex they understand poultry thoroughly, and can make a better price for it than in other parts of England. All round us they do not go in for fattening poultry quite so largely; but in the adjoining parish of Fletching close to me there are 2 or 3 very large fatters who send their stuff in by hundreds of dozens per week, and keep 8 or 10 men for stuffing and nothing else. These Sussex fowls are artificially crammed for the London market, and a great many of them are not bred in Sussex at all, many come from Ireland; it is only the feeding that is done in Sussex. A Surrey fowl is generally quoted as the very best fowl, but they chiefly come from Sussex. The poultry food is bought, nothing is grown. The great thing is to get as much land as possible over which to run the poultry so as the ground shall not get stench. One of the farmers at Heathfield bought a small property at Bromley to rear some of his poultry there. He sent it into Leadenhall market, and could not understand why it did not make nearly so good a price as he thought it ought to have made. The next day the same poultry went in his old Heathfield baskets, and made a good price. I am told that this poultry now goes into the market from Bromley marked "Heathfield, Sussex."

Foreign Poultry.

I have never heard that the great importation of Italian, French and other poultry has lowered the prices of our Sussex fowls. The prices have kept up very well. The fowls are forced very early in the year, as they make big prices if they can get them in early.

Labour.

We have enough labour now. We are near the Ashdown Forest where a great many labourers live, and when I first went to Maresfield 18 years ago we had to get work for them in the winter, because there was not sufficient work, but a number of gentlemen's houses having been built in the neighbourhood recently there is just about enough work for them. They work as under-gardeners and on building operations.

Wages.

The wage of an ordinary labouring hand is 15s. a week. The building was not entirely the cause of the rise, but about 8 or 9 years ago we only paid 12s.; and now the carters and shepherds, &c., get 17s. and 18s. up to a £1 week and their cottages. We do not give harvest money. We pay overtime; the men get a little beer and that is all. There has been a fair rise in wages altogether.

Cottage Accommodation.

Our people often are badly housed. I hope something will come of the recent case in our immediate neighbourhood with reference to Mr. Justice Grantham. The rules and regulations are very absurd. All sorts of things have to be done which entirely prevent people from building. We could not build brick cottages with a slate roof very cheaply. If our people could build them for £120 apiece there would be a good many built. One advantage of having your men on the spot is that if they have to walk a mile or two in the morning they are tiring themselves and dissipating their energy.

The rent we make out to be £1 per acre, but not with big farms. On our estate the principal farm has some land as good as any. There are 340 acres and we only get just over 10s. an acre for that, but cut up into small farms we can make £1 an acre of it. Labour is £1. 4s. an acre. Feeding stuffs are a big item with us—£1. 16s. 6d. (average of the last 3 years) because we feed a lot of cattle, but we do not require so much bought manure. Machinery and implements 9d. per acre, though this is possibly a trifle too high owing to recent purchases of new machinery. At the end of the year we make a valuation, and we put it at 15s. an acre. That takes in all we have on the place, in addition to what is bought new. Rates and taxes amount to 5s. an acre at least.

Annual Outgoings.

877

Our Education Rate now will be something like 1s. in the £. The whole rates have gone up. The other day at our Parish Council Meeting the Assistant Overseer showed that they had gone up nearly 100 per cent. in the last 8 years, including the Education Rate. It is very extravagant. There does not seem to be anybody to keep the expenses down.

Local Rates.

Railway rates are excessive, and are against the home growers. If farmers would combine, and put pressure on the railway companies they would get the rates reduced. They must combine, and they must send their stuff in convenient parcels and in bigger bulks. They could get concessions by local agitation, not by legislation. In my district the principal thing is poultry, and I think the railway people forward them at fair rates. This is one of the few things that the farmers have combined in, and send their stuff in together. Certain carriers in the district go round and collect the poultry, and send it on in properly constructed boxes and crates. There is the question of milk in East Sussex. Farmers have combined there to some extent and got their rates down. If the consignments from various consignors, though small in bulk, should come to one consignee then each of those consignors could get bulk rates. Some years ago there was an agitation got up at Uckfield, but the farmers took very little trouble about it.

Railway Rates.

878

I should be very glad to see some duty put upon corn, and more especially upon flour. A moderate tax on flour would have the effect of keeping out a great deal of foreign flour. If we may judge from what happened in the past when the 1s. duty was put on it, it seems to have done us considerable good, and if that duty could be doubled, a very large amount of good would be done. Generally I think that the whole of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would be very beneficial. We have to prove what the labourers will say; but as far as we can judge they are in favour at present.

Duties.

It is my impression that nobody would be induced even to consider a bounty on wheat.

Bounty on Wheat.

WITNESS No. 170.

MR. CHARLES ARTHUR WEBB

(Farmer and Breeder, Wilton, Mallow, Co. Cork).

879

I have 3 farms, 650 acres altogether, 70 tillage and the rest grazing and stock-raising. I have a mill at Mallow.

Good quality wheat was largely cultivated in our district, the land and climate are very suitable. Our market is Mallow, where the mills bought all the wheat grown locally. Our wheat fetched 50s. a quarter 30 years ago. Shortly after 1879 wheat began to fall, and is now little grown but increasingly imported. Indian corn competes in price with home-grown cereals. Barley is not much grown except south of Cork. Profits have greatly diminished the last 30 years. Much land is now grass-sown or let run to grass, tillage is neglected. Stock-raising has been fairly remunerative but not as extensive as it should be. I keep Shorthorn cattle and breed young horses (hunters by thoroughbred sires). The latter is not paying. I sell 4 or 5-year-old hunters to English people at £80 each; it pays very well. There is great uncertainty in breeding horses by the same sire and dam, it is impossible to tell what sort of horse you will get, they vary 50 % in size, price, &c. We have very good mares but many go abroad, it would be better to keep them; we have now plenty of good thoroughbred stallions as more care is being taken than formerly. More shows have been established and prizes given to the farmers for their mares, free nominations, &c. Liberal prizes should be given for foals. Irish salt firkin butter is made by farmers in remote districts and sold only in Cork market, but the old system is dying out through the extension of co-operative dairies which make a better article.

State of Agriculture.

880

I keep a permanent staff of labourers, otherwise it would be very difficult to get labour. They are principally old men and boys, the young emigrate. It is specially difficult to get people to milk cows and keep a dairy going, partly because a condensed-milk factory in Mallow takes all our girls and boys. They have no Sunday work there unless they wish, and then they get extra pay, and on our farm the cows must be milked daily. Several herds have been dispersed within the last few years through this difficulty. Wages have increased a little.

Labour.

Railway rates are as high as when wheat was double its present value. Lower foreign transport rates help to flood this country with foreign grain. Owing to high rates cattle bought at Mallow Fair are walked to Cork, 20 miles, to be shipped to the English markets. Railways might do more to encourage the farmer. I used to send milk to Dublin, and got a better price than at home. In Dublin I had a milk contract, and the rate from Mallow to Dublin was 1d. per gallon, which left a satisfactory profit. Then trade fell off and I gave it up; later when I tried again the railway rate had risen to 1½d. per gallon, and I was not able to take the contract.

Railway Rates.

Many successful co-operative societies exist in the south in connection with the wholesale societies; they supply the farmers with feeding stuffs, manures, &c., at wholesale rates. Besides advantages in buying, the poorer farmers get ready money and better prices for their milk.

Co-operation.

881 Cottage
Accommodation.

We have 276 cottages provided under the Labourers Act in Mallow, 115 with 1 acre and 161 with $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre plots. The latter is more suitable to the agricultural labourer than an acre, and labourers are quite satisfied with the half. They do not always cultivate 1 acre, but very often till half very well and generally consume the produce, and feed a pig or two on Indian meal, potatoes and pollard. They grow oats, cabbages, and mostly potatoes, and some of the land is left in grass. Cottagers do not kill their pig, but sell it to the bacon factories in Limerick, Waterford or England, and always buy the cheapest bacon, generally American. They do not use much bacon. The rent of the cottages is 10d. to 1s. 2d. The average cost of cottages and an acre is £180, the houses with $\frac{1}{2}$ -acre cost £160. The repayment of our loan for building cottages comes to £2,050, the cottage rents realise £1,164, and the deficiency is met by a 2d. rate.

Annual Outgoings.
Duties.

Feeding stuffs, 17s. ; manure, 2s. ; machinery, 3s. ; rates and taxes, 6s. ; rent, 17s. ; labour, 18s.

I am strongly in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposed duties, which would be of the greatest advantage to Irish agriculturists—the labourer as well as the farmer. A small tax on wheat or flour would not be felt ; the tax 2 years ago was felt by no one in this country, it brought in £2,500,000, indirectly all paid by foreigners. If continued it would reduce taxation in this country. Cheap transit bringing much Indian corn lowers the price of home produce, but this cheap commodity is an advantage to the agriculturist and should not be taxed. Foreign meat should be marked as such instead of being made up like and sold as home grown. There would be a gradual check to emigration, better wages, more constant employment, more tillage, more stock-raising, more money spent at home instead of abroad, a gradual reduction of taxes, and a further development of our resources.

882

WITNESS No. 171.

MR. C. S. WOLTON

(Farmer and Breeder, Ixworth, Bury St. Edmunds, representing the Suffolk Agricultural Association).

I farm about 400 acres arable, and 150 acres pasture. This is quite an arable district—the whole of Suffolk is so in fact. I breed nearly all pedigree livestock, and it is a considerable help to me in making good prices.

State of
Agriculture.

I grow the ordinary corn crops on the arable land ; but of late years, owing to the low price of wheat, I have only grown 25% of my wheat course. I used to grow about 80 acres every year, but only 25 acres last year and this year 25 to 30, the balance going into oats and barley. The majority of my neighbours are only farming the best part of their land and leaving the other land down for 3 or 4 years' ley, and then breaking it up and substituting oats and barley. We have been very hard hit by the fall in prices. Mine is a corn growing district. I commenced business at Ixworth in 1883. We do not get men of capital now on the farms. They are a different class of men entirely from the old ones—men with smaller capital who farm just the best part of the land, and leave the remainder down in grass. We have had a few Scotch people and North Country men, and they have mostly stayed. They are hard workers and hard livers, and they look at money before they spend it. We do not grow potatoes to any extent. It is principally the four course shift. Sheep are the most profitable part of our farming. We go in largely for black-faced Suffolk sheep. They have come much to the front lately, and we find them hardy, prolific ewes, and the mutton good quality. We fold them on the land. I go in for the Suffolk horse and red-polled cattle. There is some very heavy land around us on which we grow beans. That does not pay very well. Suffolk is a great county for pig rearing ; we rear more pigs per acre than any other county in England. Just now we have an exceptionally bad market. It is terribly depressed owing to the amount of pork that comes in from Holland. Our markets are deluged with pork.

883

Labour.

We are not so well off as regards labour. When I first came to Ixworth there was a population of about 1,000. Now it is reduced to 800. Still I am glad we have not more for I do not know how we should be able to find the money for them. The young, strong fellows have gone into the towns, and we are left with the older men. The quality of the labour deteriorates, and we do not get the same amount of work done for the money. If we could provide men with a good cottage we could keep them frequently ; but otherwise the young fellows will go away, and you cannot wonder at it.

884

Wages.

There has been no change in the rates of wages during the last 8 or 10 years. We are paying 12s. a week, harvest money ranges from £7 to £7 10s. a man. The harvest occupies about a month and during that time he does not draw wages. At the hay harvest he gets beer and extra money for overtime. Our horse-keepers get 14s. a week, and sometimes a cottage free, and at harvest also £7 to £7 10s. Our shepherds get 14s. to 15s. a week, a cottage and 6d. a lamb. My flock is about 300, and I graze my wether lambs.

Causes of
Change.

I attribute the change in the condition of Agriculture almost entirely to the low price of corn. Our disasters started in the wet year of 1879, from which time there has been an almost continuous drop in prices. The years 1893, 1894, and 1895 were very bad years indeed. Wheat went down to £1 a quarter. In 1894 we sold it at that price in Bury market. There was a tremendous drought that year, but imports were very large. That is what knocked the price down. We got the cheap loaf then with a vengeance, with the result that nobody had any money to buy anything with. Many men were standing with their hands in their pockets both in the town and in the country. I never saw so much unemployed labour in my life ; and a Liberal Government was in power at the same time—one would have imagined it would have been a sort of paradise. The working man got his loaf of bread cheap—when he could buy it. It has been stated that there are 20,000 acres of derelict land in Essex county ; and there are now between 200 and 300 mills standing idle. That is because of the demand for rolled flour. We get so much flour from abroad that these country mills have been knocked out

of it altogether. They still do a little trade in grinding barley, but not enough to keep them going all the year round. Where they used to employ 3 men they employ 1. And we lose that most valuable feeding stuff, the offal from the wheat.

There are in East Suffolk 2 agricultural co-operative societies. The principle is right, and I hope they will progress. One society at Framlingham, started in 1903, has 114 members, and an annual turnover of £1,210. Its chief business has been the collection and sale of eggs, and it has undoubtedly raised the prices throughout the district. It has been able to supply eggs in large and regular quantities and in reliable condition and thus secure a much better market. They have also combined to purchase coal, cake, manure and implements, and have secured a grain and cake store adjacent to the station. The other is the Eastern Counties' Farmers' Co-operative Association at Ipswich, which started on May 25th, 1904, and has now 140 members. That is rather a large concern; up to August 31st the turnover was about £7,000, and business is steadily increasing. Its operations are at present confined to the purchase of feeding stuffs, manures and implements. The sale of agricultural products is a more difficult matter, but a start has been made. I am very anxious that we should have a branch in West Suffolk, and I suggested it to the Farmers' Club to which I belong.

Co-operation.

Boys in agricultural districts are kept at school too long. I would give the boys with brains every chance to get on. I do not care how poor a boy is, if he has the ability let him have an opportunity of getting to the University, by a series of scholarships which the County Council might provide; but to keep a big boy—a boy of muscle—at school till he is 14 years old, seems to give him a dislike to country life and country pursuits. He gets to think himself too much of a swell to be in the country, and he does very little good at school. I should like to have the boy leave at 13, and then be compelled to attend a night school during the winter months for the next 2 years.

Education.

The housing question is a very important question with us. We have been rather badly off for cottages and our Thingoe Rural District Council was the first to adopt the "Housing of the Working Classes Act." The Council built 8 cottages with 3 bedrooms, in pairs, in 1892, with a $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of land attached to each. £1,700 was borrowed from the Public Works Loan Commissioners at $3\frac{1}{4}$ %, repayable in 30 years. They are let at a yearly rental of £5 10s., the tenant paying rates, which amount to about another 15s. Each cottage cost rather more than £200—8 cottages for £1,700, land included. The rent is more than an ordinary labourer can afford to pay, and the result is that there is not a single labourer in them; they are occupied by ex-policemen and odd men, such as carpenters and blacksmiths, &c. Those people moved out of some of the better cottages and the labourers went up from some of the worst ones into these. These second-class cottages cannot be had under £4. We adopted the second part of the Act and pulled down some of the worst cottages. I much regret that the cottages cost so much to build. The District Council would have built them in a row to save expense, but they were compelled to build them in pairs, with a well to each pair, which certainly increased the cost. The rooms are large and lofty, and the cost was added to unnecessarily. The Local Government Board laid down these rules; they produced the plans, and we had to build accordingly. A wooden house is as good to live in as any other, and if we could build a cottage for £150 we could afford to let it at a reasonable rent, and ask other people to build them.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Local rates certainly have increased of recent years, especially the Education Rate, which is a very heavy burden. A large majority of the parishes in Suffolk paid no education rate at all, or only a small voluntary one, and now it is as high as 8d. in the £. Under the Agricultural Rates Act we do not get any relief from the Education Rate. This Act was passed some years previously, and so the Education Rate was not taken into account. There were only a few School Boards in Suffolk at that time, and these rates were counted in, but in the large majority of parishes the Education Rate was a voluntary one and was not accounted for, so now the land has to bear the whole of it. The assessment of agricultural land has gone down, and we must not forget that when the rates look very much higher than they were 10 years ago.

Local Rates.

The Agricultural Rates Act has been of the greatest possible benefit to us, and we very much hope it will be made a permanent Act. I do not know of a single instance where the landlord has taken advantage of it.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

They would not make much difference to the farmer, but certainly would be a help to him; prices would be increased to some extent. Land which is now laid down to grass would be in some cases broken up again; we should set the plough going, and there would be more work for the labourers. By the duty on manufactured articles, the artisans would find more employment, they would get more money and want more of our beef and mutton. Mr. Chamberlain's is the only policy which proposes to do anything for agriculture, and I most strongly support it. I hope a sensible difference will be made between the duties on flour and wheat. I should also like to see an extra duty on foreign malting barley; because whatever might be the price of barley, the price of beer to the consumer would not be different. The objections that are raised to Mr. Chamberlain's scheme are purely sentimental ones. The cost of living will not be increased a single farthing. It is simply a transference of taxation from articles such as tea and sugar, which are used by the poorest of the poor, to others which are produced in this country, which can be done without increasing the expenditure of the working classes.

Duties.

WITNESS No. 172.

THE RT. HON. THOMAS ANDREWS, D.L.

(Farmer and Flax Spinner, Comber, Co. Down; Chairman of Belfast and County Down Railway, and of Down County Council).

My farm of 100 acres is at Comber, a small village of 2,000 inhabitants, largely a mill population, $\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the centre of Belfast, and 4 from the boundary.

Dairying.

889 State of
Agriculture.

It is a dairy farm, chiefly for the sale of milk. We only make butter for my house and to use up surplus milk. I sell milk chiefly in Comber, and send some to Belfast by rail. Most farmers between Comber and Belfast sell milk to retailers who fetch it from the farms morning and evening. These farmers have had lower prices in recent years, but seem fairly prosperous. Farmers further from Belfast have greater difficulties and smaller profits. A local increase in wheat acreage this year is chiefly owing to recent higher prices through the partial failure of American crops, and is partly a result of the fine 1904 autumn. Wheat growing has been largely abandoned in Ireland. It was formerly much grown in my district. It can only grow on better quality land. Small farmers with poorer soil grow oats. With suitable land wheat is more profitable than oats even at present prices. The last 3 years' wheat has risen from 6s. to 7s. 6d. per cwt. The straw is of considerable value; on my land we can average 20 to 30 cwt. wheat per acre, and 30 to 50 cwt. straw. Owing to the low price obtainable in consequence of large imports, it is more profitable to use the wheat for cattle feeding than sell it. When hay reaches 4s. per cwt. imported Canadian hay and straw keep down prices. German oats and large quantities of Danish and other foreign butters are imported. Many early potatoes come to Belfast from the Channel Islands and St. Malo. Formerly I grew early potatoes, but owing to import and home competition prices are much lower early in the season and late potatoes are more profitable. Tillage has diminished and grazing has increased. In Down in 1861 we had 186,361 acres pasture and 338,118 tillage crops (including hay). In 1904 pasture 265,328 and other crops 245,207. In all Ireland in 1861 we had in pasture 9,533,529 acres, other crops 5,890,536. In 1904 pasture increased to 10,586,639, and crops decreased to 4,634,125, notwithstanding a great increase in hay. These changes are caused by foreign competition, which has been made more formidable by largely-increased transport facilities, especially large fast steamers and low freights. For 7 years to 1887 I managed a tillage farm of 250 acres, as a trustee, where we had fat and store cattle and sheep. I gradually converted it into a dairy farm; because so much fresh meat is imported frozen from Argentina, New Zealand, &c., and fattening cattle, except to get rid of old dairy cows, is now unprofitable. I have sold fat cattle at 80s. per cwt. dead weight. Present price 56s. to 60s. One-fifth of this farm was formerly in wheat, 8s. to 10s. per cwt. then a record low price is now never attainable. We had a flour mill in Comber for many generations, but it closed owing to imports of American and other flours. The miller removed to Belfast.

Labour.

Labour in many districts is scarce, the labourers having gone to towns, as farmers cannot afford the wages paid there. Comber is better situated, labourers' families being employed in flax-spinning. Wages have increased recently.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates are moderate, but farmers cart much produce into Belfast markets, where they personally sell it. The railway brings manure and lime from Belfast for farmers. The Belfast and County Down Railway, 76 miles long with branches, has prospered the last 25 years. We paid 6% dividend this year, and 6½% for many years before coals rose. We have given the public an admirable service, and our rates compare favourably with any railway. The following are specimen rates per mile for long and short distances respectively:—Manure, 0·8d. and 1½d.; lime (in 6-ton lots), 1·1d. and 2d.; potatoes and turnips, 1·2d. and 2d. per ton; cattle (full truck loads, 8 to 10 beasts), 6d. and 9·7d. per truck.

891

Education.

Agricultural education has been largely promoted by our county council and the Department of Agriculture. We have had for 5 years instructors lecturing in villages on agriculture, poultry, dairying, horticulture and manual instruction, domestic economy, cookery, &c.; and an agricultural school, where the students are taught free, and if necessary receive an allowance for food, lodgings, travelling, &c. Lecturers give demonstrations in butter making, &c., the effects of which have been remarkably good. I have attended these lectures as chairman of the county council and have seen large attendances and great interest shown. The lecturer visits farms, discussing the subjects of the lectures with farmers, and advising on changes in cultivation, and he experiments with oats, manures, &c., of which the results are published widely in the district. Till recently foreign countries were far in advance of us in agriculture. Owing to the splendid services of Sir Horace Plunkett and our new Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction we are being placed on an equality with other countries in technical matters.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Many labourers' cottages have been built under the district councils; a very proper and necessary work. Many old cottages are untenanted and falling into ruins.

Local Rates.

In Co. Down rates and taxes have been rather lower through the agricultural grant, £28,898 per year, for this county, but for which rates would be higher owing to much new work, such as lunatic asylum (£20,000), court-house, harbours, and improved roads.

892

Annual
Outgoings.

Rent (only nominal) 1s. 6d. per acre, labour £3 11s., feeding stuffs £4 13s., manure, lime, 1s. 8d., machinery, etc., 8s. 6d., rates and taxes 6s. 8d., total £9 2s. 4d. per acre. Feeding stuffs for dairy cows is a large outlay.

Duties.

If Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are put into force a considerable advantage will accrue to agriculture and other industries. The recent rise in wheat led to much more wheat being sown, and if a small duty is put on foreign wheat, flour, beef, butter, &c., the Irish farmer will be directly benefited, and indirectly by the general increased prosperity, and enabled to provide more and better-paid labour. Emigration, which has reduced the population from 8 to 4 millions, is the result of want of employment, and the agricultural labourer and small farmer have suffered most. These proposals would result in foreign tariffs being lowered in our favour, and the ideal of universal free trade would be nearer realisation. They will not appreciably increase the cost of living to working people, but simply substitute revised and well-considered taxation for an antiquated system which has outlived its day, by putting a duty on imports which we can produce ourselves and lessening the taxes on necessities like tea, sugar, coffee, &c., which we have to import. This policy, with an arrangement mutually advantageous to us and our colonies, will result in agriculture becoming more prosperous for all classes engaged in it.

Preference.

A preferential arrangement with the Colonies will bind the Empire together "by ties of interest as well as by ties of sympathy," and enable us to maintain the commercial position which was gained under conditions very different from the present.

WITNESS No. 173.

MR. D. R. O'BRIEN

(Land Agent, Dairy Farmer and Grazier, 16, Upper Mallow Street, Limerick).

I farm 1,700 stat. acres, of which 1,350 are devoted entirely to dry stock, the rest to dry stock and dairy, very little tillage.

The condition of agriculture is very miserable in our district. I attribute this to the Land Acts. Our rents are fixed for 15 years, and tenants work out their land knowing that at the end of the time the rent will be lowered. The Acts are a direct encouragement to bad farming, and have had that effect; once a farm is purchased this inducement to farm badly is gone. Tillage farming no longer pays, dairy farming and the raising of cattle have taken its place. Land has been steadily laid down to grass and the price of labour keeps it in grass. Adare, once a great wheat-growing district, now grows only small patches for thatching straw.

State of
Agriculture.

The dry stock farmer with little tillage, who buys his stock, is dependent upon market variations for his profit. For the past 8 years I have sold off one farm 80-90 3 year old in-calf heifers, all bought locally, at average prices as follows:—1897, £14 4s.; 1901, £16 0s. 3d. (the best year); 1902, £13 12s. 6d.; 1904, £15 0s. 3d., quality the same all through. Fat stock rose from a low price in 1897 until 1902, and has fallen since. I am now selling at 54s. per cwt. stock worth 58s. in 1904, and 60s. in 1903. The dealers make an almost uniform price through the Kingdom, but the hay crop, especially the English crop, influences it. A short hay crop in England makes young stock cheap. Yearlings in 1887-8-9 were quoted at £6 17s. 10d. For this same farm I buy at the fairs in Limerick and Clare in January every year, 150 heifers at an average of £8 12s., and 30 or 40 6 months' old calves at £5, about the same price as 8 years ago. Mutton has sold better for the past 2 years than before. Sheep will now sell at 48s. that would not have fetched more than 43s. some years ago. I sold wool at 8½d. per lb. in 1887, and the price fell steadily until 1903 to 6½d. per lb. Since then it has risen; I sold in 1904 at 9½d., and at 1s. and 1s. 0½d. this year.

Stock.

894

There has been a great improvement in the method of manufacturing and the quantity of the butter produced, not owing to improved education but to the fact that well-managed co-operative creameries were started all through the country by Sir Horace Plunkett some years ago. The Irish Agricultural Organisation looks after them, keeps the accounts, controls the managers and inspects when required. The butter is mostly sold as first-class at good prices. The farmer has only to deliver the fresh milk at the creamery and take away the separated, whereas under the old system he made the butter and sold it himself, at some expense, and much of it was inferior. Under the old system 3 gals. average milk yielded 1 lb. of butter, now the average is 1 lb. from 2½ gals., made and sold at the creameries at a cost of about 7s. per cwt. There is no doubt the creamery system pays far better than the other. There is prejudice against it in parts because when first started the farmers did not understand the necessity of adding linseed meal and other things to the separated milk, to replace the fat, for calf feeding, and the calves became diseased and died. Pigs have greatly decreased because practically all the milk goes to the creameries. In Limerick most of the land is dairy land, and used as such. The farmers turn the cows out to grass in summer for 6 or 8 months, and milk them, and in the winter do nothing with them. They do not attempt to make them produce as much as they might, and grow practically no roots. The remainder of the year they are kept in sheds and get nothing but hay, and run dry in a very short time. Cows out to grass are practically never fed, and they produce very much less milk and butter than they might. On dry land they would do quite as well out, but it is very warm and wet in winter. During the summer a good cow on good land would produce a maximum of £12. She costs more than £2 to winter. Farmers allow per cow, 2 tons of hay, worth £4 (probably rather more), leaving £8 profit, but if the cow were better fed during the winter, though she could not be milked, she would produce more milk in the summer. When the cows of the ordinary farmer come out on to the grass in May they look three-quarters starved. With hay and £2 worth of cake for winter and the value of the calf there would still be a good balance of profit for the summer milk, for an early calf is worth £2. There is no profit on winter milking if cake fed, but the cows might be fed largely on roots produced on the land. There is very little winter farming done in the south of Ireland. Most of the creameries are entirely closed from December to March. They lose all their customers by producing nothing all the winter and have to pay their employees. The skim milk that is returned to the farmer is in good condition. Under the proprietary system the farmers complained very much of the quality of the milk. In many cases it was bad. Now they see that it is returned in proper condition, and that the creamery plant is kept clean. The Department of Agriculture give grants now for the purchase of pasteurising plant and insist upon the milk being pasteurised, &c., and that has all done a vast amount of good. The prices of butter as published by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction averaged 89s. 11d. per cwt. for the years 1886-7-8-9, and 96s. 7d. for the years 1900-1-2-3. It was lower in 1904, but is now selling well. Dairy farming ought to be quite as profitable now as 15 years ago, but it is not because there is no real attempt to work the land in Limerick. It is treated as a sort of ranche; the cattle are put out and grazed on it, but there is no attempt to make the farm produce as much as it might; and there is no labour. Close to the towns as a rule the whole milk is bought, but out in the country there is no demand for it, though the farmers would sell it if they could get anything for it. Experts on this question have stated that the whole loss on Irish butter was due to not dairying in winter, and that whereas the Danes heat all their cow-houses through the winter with hot pipes, and keep up a constant supply, the Cork butter merchants have to go to Manchester and London to sell at 10s. to 15s. a cwt. cheaper in order to get back their customers for spring. There is no doubt that we sell in the spring at worse prices than if we kept up a continuous supply all the year round. We are driven out of the market. That is one of the disadvantages of merely summer dairying.

Butter.

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Now that there is hardly any tillage, much less labour is required, and the best of the labourers and sons of small farmers have largely emigrated to America and Canada. In Limerick the land is so badly worked that the farmer does not want any labourers except during the hay harvest, and labourers earn good wages for a couple of months in summer. Farmers complain of scarcity of labour, and no doubt during the

Labour.

897 **Labour**
—continued.

hay-making season it is impossible in many places to get sufficient extra labour; but all the year round, permanent labourer is not difficult to get. It is a common thing in Limerick for a farmer who has, say 60 or 70 acres, to have 20 dairy cows. I have been on 10 or 12 farms in a day and found the farmer with only one labourer, or in many cases no permanent labourer at all, except a man who is engaged from the 25th March to Christmas. That is during the milking season. The price of labour is said to have gone up, but this generally means that the farmer cannot get his casual summer labourer as cheap as he could before. He does not want an all the year round workman; and the result is the best have left the country. Women milk generally in Ireland, also boys, but men milkers are increasing. A great number of girls and labourers emigrate. It is hard now to get a young man who can plough. I want a good ploughman, but cannot get one.

Wages.

11s. or 12s. a week with a house and half an acre of land. The rate of wages has increased. Years ago a common rate was 9s. a week. The small farmers hire servants from the 25th March to Christmas; that is for the milking season, and the wages of those servants, who live in the farmers' houses, have gone up from £9—£11 a year to £15—£17.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

The labourers are mostly well-housed now. The Local Poor Law authorities have power to compulsorily take sites for labourers' cottages with one statute acre of land. These powers have been largely used, and the cottages and land which are provided at a very small rent have been the very greatest benefit to the labourers. Where they have not got labourers' cottages they are badly housed, but in most cases now a good labourer has a cottage at 1s. a week.

898 **Annual Outgoings.**

On my farm these are:—Rent, 15s. 6d. per stat. acre; Labour, 6s. 8d.; feeding stuffs, 3s., and rates 2s. The amount that is spent on machinery and manure would be small. The rent is much the heaviest item. On a farm of 900 statute acres there are 17 to 20 acres of tillage, and nothing is sold off that.

Co-operation.

Changes in market organisation have been for the better. There is great want of co-operation among farmers. We have a co-operative buying society, but it does very little; the creameries and agricultural societies buy feeding stuffs, seeds, manures and some machinery for their members. The former have also done a good deal towards bulking goods in refrigerator vans. Bulk orders are an economy not only in money, but in quality. In the South of Ireland there is a creamery every 2 or 3 miles, and without them Irish butter could not be sold. It does not fetch the price of first class Danish, but soil and climate are suitable, and it might. Experts say the milk is badly handled and dirty, and there is an abuse of preservatives in the creameries.

Education.

The Board of Agriculture is helping us by schemes for improving the breeding of horses and stock. Itinerant instructors have visited the district, and instructive leaflets are sent to the farmers. Education in dairy farming has not yet had much result. The Irish Agricultural Organisation does far more good than the Department of Agriculture.

Railway Rates.

899 Railway rates are higher here than abroad. Freight for butter from Copenhagen to Manchester is 45s. per ton, and from Thurles, Co. Tipperary (within about 80 miles of Dublin) to Manchester is 40s. per ton. The G. S. & W. Railway have recently given a cheap rate for small lots of agricultural produce to Dublin for butter, cheese, &c.

Local Rates.

The grant under the Local Government Act of 1898 (the equivalent of the Agricultural Rates Act in England) paid rather more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the local rates. The rates on one of my farms averaged £100 a year—the grant reduced them to £75, but they have now risen to £90 again, almost as much as before the Act, when, furthermore, a considerable proportion was recoverable from the landlord. The rates depend upon how the local Poor Law authorities manage their affairs. In one union they will be only one half what they are in another. In a union where there is a large town the rates are higher.

Duties.

There must be no tax on maize. Maize is bought very very largely; in fact all the pigs and calves are reared on it, and the cheaper it could be kept the better from a farmers' point of view.

Effect on Labour.

If the price of butter, beef and wheat were higher, no doubt the farmers would work their land better and the labourers get more constant employment.

Preference.

I do not anticipate that preferential arrangements with the Colonies would make any immediate change in the character of the farming.

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WITNESS No. 174.

MR. FRANK BROWNING

(Manager of the Imperial Food Supplies Company Limited, Cold Air Stores, Malton, Yorkshire).

The company was established by Earl Fitz-William and Lord Myddleton to deal with agricultural produce and to take charge of the public slaughter-house of the town. It is a private company, but it is on similar lines to the co-operative movement.

**State of
Agriculture.**

Between Malton and Scarborough more land is going down to grass than 10 years ago; but on the Wolds at Thirsk the conditions remain the same. We are going in more for root crops and sheep. The starting of this company a year ago made a lot of difference to the laying down of land for dairying.

Dairying.

We purchase from the farmers 600 to 650 gallons of milk daily, which is all separated and the separated milk returned to them. The farmers get the advantage of the profit made out of the milk, but we are unable to sell the butter, as we cannot compete with the Danish in price. We get a better quality, but it costs us

more to produce. Our butter is kept of exactly the same standard and quality. We have the Lynn patent cold storage apparatus to keep it in perfect condition. The G.N. Railway Company's analyst reported the butter to be of excellent quality, but the price we quoted, 1s. 1d. per lb., was too high for them. The cost of the milk is 6½d. at the farm, 1d. for collection, and ½d. to take back the separated milk, making 8d. There is 2d. out of that for the separated milk if we could sell it. Last year we could not get 1d. for it, and poured upwards of 300 gallons down the drain. It takes about 4 gallons of milk to make nearly 1½ gallons of cream so it is quite impossible for us to make butter at 1s. 1d. We could afford to lose on the butter if we had a good business in milk, but then the farmers do not take back sufficient separated milk, and we have it on our hands and lose the 2d. per gallon. I established a milk cart at a cost of about £50, and our lad came back with about 4s. per day. That did not do. I keep a few pigs, but being in the town there is no profit in them. To give the home grower a chance I would suggest that those selling foreign produce should be under restrictions similar to the Margarine Act. I do not say that foreign produce should be kept out of the country, or that a high duty should be added to make it so expensive that the poorer classes could not purchase it, but I would make it compulsory to notify the public when produce is home bred, home killed, or home made, and also put a moderate duty on the imported article. It is the general complaint of the dead poultry trade that a lot of foreign produce is sold to their detriment. It is brought over in the Lynn freezers and kept in one position and at one temperature the whole of the time. I have some poultry in our cold room at Malton that was put in in the second week in December, and it is still good.

Compared with 10 or 15 years ago, we are in a worse position, so far as profits are concerned, but the rents, in some cases, have gone down through big farms being held in hand. We are able to deal in a much better market. We have an auction room, and York has one, and there is competition by butchers, so that while things are not equal to what they were in the past, our receipts have increased to a considerable extent.

We want some different method of dealing with produce. Maltsters get the barley to Leeds, and then compare with the sample and write: "You can either take 3s. a quarter less or have the barley back," and the unfortunate farmer has to sell it on those terms. We want an exchange. I have established one at our place, but cannot say whether it will be a success.

It is customary to board and lodge the agricultural labourers on the farm premises. At the hirings on Martinmas Day the lads are engaged at so much a year in the house and all found. That is a very bad system. It means that a man is compelled to labour for a farmer for 12 months whether he likes it or not. If he runs away the farmer has the power to apply to the Court and bring him back. I have spoken to many good farmers, and they say it is the custom, and it suits them very well. We have many men out of work because they will not engage on those terms. The labourer has to get up at 4.30, winter and summer, breakfast at 6. He never sees a cup of tea. He has some warm skimmed milk, and every farmer has got his separator now, and does not leave a large amount of cream. He gets 20 minutes for breakfast. When he goes out his horses are ready harnessed, and he works till dinner-time, half an hour, and then till dark. In the South of England they have a stipulated time to leave off, but not in Yorkshire. It is not surprising that in these circumstances many prefer working in towns and on the railways. A foreman gets £24 a year and all found. The waggoner would get about £24 or £25, and wages graduate to the new lad, who gets about £8, but has to get his own washing done, which costs him £1 a year. The married man gets 15s. to 16s. a week; out of that he has to pay 2s. a week rent. He gets £1 extra for harvest—20 years ago it was £5. A lad does not get extras. The shepherd gets probably another £2 for shearing and the lambing season.

Lack of house accommodation is one of the great evils from which we are suffering. There are 10 cottages in the neighbourhood, in one of which I had the misfortune to live for 2 years. There was no back door to it, and everything had to be brought into the house through the kitchen. It was impossible to get anything down the stairs from the bedroom, and the sanitary arrangements were contrary to decency. That is not an isolated case.

The railway question is very important. When I was a young man cobbles came up the Derwent with 30 or 40 tons of coal each, and we were able to get coal at 18s. to 19s. a ton. The N.E.R., 10 or 12 years ago, got the lease of this river. We have a barge, but there is not now sufficient water for it to get down, and I have not seen a ketch for 7 or 8 years. We are paying 26s. to 27s. a ton for coal. The N.E. Ry. Co. have no competition, and they have allowed the river to get silted up. The Railway Commissioners ought to see that it is cleared out. That is a clear case of our having lost by the Railway Company acquiring the waterway. We are paying for coal 25s. run alongside our place, the railway metals coming up to our wall. The coal costs 9s. 10d. at the pit at Pontefract, and it has practically no distance to come.

A man holding a number of glasshouses and 20 acres of market gardens, who has been at the business 70 years, is paying 60% more rates than 15 years ago. Other large market gardeners and fruit growers pay 75% more than they did. The ordinary agricultural farm, without any special buildings and away from the town, pays in rates about one-third more than 20 years ago.

The landlords got the advantage of the Agricultural Rates Act. The rates have gone up since the passing of the Act, and if it had not come to the assistance of the farmer he would have had to pay more. It has helped the tenant in hop-growing districts, where the rate has increased a lot, and in fruit-growing districts; but it has not been much advantage to us.

There ought to be a tariff upon dead poultry. Almost all the labourers in our districts have a piece of land from ¼ to ½ of an acre, and they all rear poultry. This year everybody has poultry on hand, and cannot get a price for it because of the Italian poultry on the market. If there were a tariff on poultry it would certainly give them an opportunity of selling at a profit. In many cases the wives of the labourers and small farmers look to their poultry to clothe the children. Two years ago I bought over 300 more each month than at present. I buy from 500 to 600 every week. The South of England people can get French birds across cheaper than we can get them from Ireland. It does not necessarily follow that home birds are better than French birds.

Profits.

902

Market
Organisation.

Labour.

Wages.

903

Cottage
Accommodation.

Railway Rates.

Local Rates.

Agricultural Rates
Act.

Duties.

904

MR. SAMUEL CLARKE

(Dairy Farmer, Grazier and Fruit Grower, Newtown Butler, South Fermanagh).

We are dairy farmers, rearers of young cattle, and to a limited extent fruit growers. We farm 270 acres—chiefly meadow and pasture.

State of
Agriculture.

The creameries have improved butter-making, and the quality of cattle has also improved by better breeding, but the improved breeds are more delicate, more subject to disease and not so hardy as the old Irish cattle were, nor are they such good milkers as a rule. They are easier put in condition and easier fattened and sooner ready for the butcher, but that is their only virtue.

The farmers around breed and feed pigs largely, I do not. They feed them on potatoes and the refuse milk of the creameries, and fatten them chiefly with Indian meal and maize, not barley; there is no barley grown in our district at all. I do not grow any wheat. The farmers round about grow a little for their own consumption and get it ground in the country mills. We grow very little grain, only some oats for our own consumption. At South Fermanagh there is very little tillage. The flax industry has almost died out in our part of the country; very few farmers grow any now, and the mills are chiefly run upon foreign flax. The decreased profit in creameries is due to foreign competition chiefly, the same reason largely holds good with regard to cattle. The demand for stores varies with the season; and according to the amount of food in England. A good grass year makes a good demand, while a bad grass season in England is always a bad season for Irish cattle, and we have that at present.

906

Fruit.

I grow apples but no other fruit. In other parts of Ulster and in Co. Armagh—strawberries and the small kinds of fruit are grown to a considerable extent.

We grow for market and try to improve our apples by growing better qualities and grubbing the old orchards. The climate suits some kinds, but is very unsuitable for others. For the kinds for which it is suitable, the acreage under cultivation has increased and is increasing. We have scarcely any apples this year. There was a severe frost just when the bloom was coming on at the end of April and the beginning of May, and the bloom was killed off all over the country. Even the old-fashioned and hardier sorts are all killed. It is going to be a scarce year for apples. With care, enterprise and industry the growing of the larger kinds of fruit, chiefly apples, will become profitable. The cultivation of fruit, if done to any considerable extent, increases employment in the district, and would tend to keep more people on the land. Labour would be more than doubled as compared with land under grass.

Osiers.

In Fermanagh we have a large quantity of low-lying, swampy land, now waste, that would very advantageously grow basket rods, willows and osiers if there was a basket-making industry in the country. I grow some, and send them to Belfast, but I get a very small price. The only place that I know of that use them is a Blind Institution. The last price for green rods was £3 15s. a ton, delivered at Belfast; delivery cost 16s. 2d. I have never tried sending them to England, the cost is too great.

907

Labour and Wages.

Labour has become scarcer and more costly; emigration is the main reason. A great many of the young men and women of the labourer and servant-girl class leave our district every season for America, and now for Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Greater employment for them would check that. Agricultural labourers are asking as much as 3s. 6d. a day, but I am not paying anything of the kind. I keep a permanent staff employed all the year round, and a few extra hands in the summer for three or four months, at 2s. to 2s. 6d. a day, the usual rate. Our labourers do not use any Indian meal for food; they used to years ago, in famine times, but not now; they are better off and able to get better food.

Cottage
Accommodation.

The Local Government authorities are building agricultural cottages all over, which has been an advantage, but unless we can get a sufficiency of agricultural labourers to take these cottages at a fair rent, they will have a tendency to go on the rates.

Education.

Our County Council is employing an Agricultural Inspector, under the Technical Education and Agricultural Department. That increases our rates by 1d. in the £ all over, and the Government grant pays the rest. This should be of service, but the men that are sent out to instruct do not know the peculiarities of the district and of the soil, &c., and sometimes the instructors have to learn from the farmers about what it is that suits their own soil. The Horticultural Department recommends to us varieties of fruit that are unsuitable to the climate, or soil, they give us valuable assistance with regard to insect attacks and such matters as spraying, &c. They are prepared to send an expert on to our land to show how to do such work. We have a man travelling in South Fermanagh at this moment for that purpose, paid by the County Council and by the grant.

908

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes have become much more burdensome in recent years and are increasing. In South Fermanagh we have very well administered Boards, that do not increase the rates unduly, but in some other districts they are extravagant. The rateable value of our land is increased when planted with fruit. If the fruit planting and growing becomes general, land under fruit trees would be undoubtedly of a higher value, and it would be in the power of the Assessment Committee to revise the valuation in that way, but this would be very unfair because it would be taxing the grower's industry and enterprise.

Co-operation.

Co-operation is generally a failure. Businesses on proprietary lines, with 1, 2 or 3 proprietors responsible for all the management, are better conducted and more successful than co-operative concerns. As an example; the Co-operative Creameries have lately gone to the bad, whereas proprietary creameries have succeeded in some cases.

Canadian Stores.

My view is that all cattle should be slaughtered at the the port of debarkation and I am entirely opposed to the re-admission of stores from Canada. It would injure our business greatly and there is the danger of importing disease. Even if I were satisfied upon this question, I would still object to their re-admission on selfish grounds—it would injure our trade.

We could grow a large proportion of all the apples taken from abroad by the United Kingdom, but railway rates are repressive of all such industries, and there are also preferential rates which are unjust in their application. All our Irish industries are handicapped by the extravagant rates charged for sending our produce over to England. We have as a rule to do with 3 Companies, and by the time that each has its share it puts more on our Irish produce than the same thing could be brought from Australia or New Zealand for. A ton of butter from Australia could be delivered in London as cheaply as from Fermanagh. Preferential rates are doing a great deal of mischief. American bacon from Liverpool cost 22s. 6d. a ton to Newtown Butler, and only 15s. a ton to Enniskillen, which is 20 miles further, and as a matter of fact the American bacon can be brought to Enniskillen and brought back to Newtown Butler cheaper and at a less cost than if delivered direct. Again, poultry is an important item in our district, it costs £4 a ton to deliver dead poultry in the larger English towns, say Manchester, and it could be brought from New Zealand for the same rate. A dealer in our district proposed to some of the fowl dealers and poultry merchants to combine to fight the Railway Companies, but they refused on the ground that it was not worth while to get into trouble with them or to try and send their stuff some other way at cheaper rates because all they had to do was to charge the farmers with what the Company charged them. That injured the industry of course.

Railway Rates.

909

I approve of the proposals put forward by Mr. Chamberlain and should like to see them carried. I have been all my life in favour of some measure that would protect our home industries and prevent the foreigners supplying our markets against our own artisans and manufacturers. In the interests of the consumer the duties ought not to be high. I would put wheat and all corn on the same footing as maize and allow it to come in free from all countries. Let the duty be put on foreign manufactured flour. There is no reason why wheat should not come in on the same footing as maize. Duties should not be put upon raw materials, but upon the manufactured articles. The American apples, when they come in reduce the price of our home grown apples very considerably but whether a duty should be imposed or not is a little doubtful. In Ireland we should not be able to supply a sufficient quantity as yet.

Duties.

910

If the proposals benefit the farmers in Ireland, they will benefit the labourers. I should not require to make any change in my methods of cultivation if these proposals were adopted.

WITNESS No. 176.

MR. JOHN KENDRICK

(Dairy Farmer, Stone Park, Stone, Staffordshire).

911

I am Chairman of the Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture whose views I represent.

My farm is 200 acres, all grass with the exception of 8 acres on which I grow roots. Formerly it was half arable, half grass. It is some of the best wheat growing land in England; but it does not pay to grow wheat. My business is principally dairying and the sale of milk, not butter and cheese, which do not pay unless first-class quality is made. We send our milk to Stone, which is quite close. We get 9d. at the farm for an imperial gallon. We have got this price for the last 18 months, but previously to that we only got 7d. in the summer months. We have 42 cows, all in milk; but we have to keep two dairies, some cows being nearly dry, some just calved, and some in full milk. Our cows go on the land, but they are always fed on corn and cake. We have 35 Shropshire sheep and young stock, 10 Shirebred horses, and 6 pigs, of which 2 are breeding sows. The low price of corn in recent years has made it impossible to cultivate arable land at a profit. Grass requires less labour, and the milk trade has made a very small profit possible on it.

Grass land is less remunerative than it was because of the large importation of foreign meat, and the increase in rates. We buy straw from neighbours, some is probably foreign. I bought oat-straw at 42s. 6d. a ton in bales delivered at Stone Station. I never use it for feeding purposes, it might keep young stock from starving but that is all. Oat sheaves cut up would make good food for horses, but would be very wasteful. 15 years ago I sold wheat at 20s. a bag (220 lbs.). Now the price is 13s., and has been 10s. The last I offered was in 1894, best quality, I was offered 9s. 9d. I did not sell, but used it.

State of
Agriculture.

912

Labour is plentiful. During the war for about 2 years it was very scarce. The quality has deteriorated very much in the last 14 years. We are not far from the Potteries and the iron trade of Wolverhampton, Dudley, and Birmingham, but the railway attracts more labourers than anything else. It takes the best and leaves us with the drunkards, inferior men, and the aged.

Labour.

Wages have increased 1s. a week or more. This week I am engaging a cowman at 16s. with cottage and garden, equal to 20s. a week, with 30s. extra for harvest money. We used to give 30s. for hay harvest, and 30s. for corn harvest. We have no corn now.

Wages.

We are not badly off for cottages. We have good landlords, and they have put up many good new cottages, but the old ones are really not good enough for a farm labourer.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Our agricultural education is wrong altogether, boys are kept at school till 14, and then expected to become farm labourers, but it is impossible. They must start much before 14, or they will not work.

Education.

Rent, 30s. per acre (about an average of our district); labour, 23s.; feeding stuffs, 30s.; manure, 2s. 6d. We do not use much artificial manure, but make 200 or 300 tons of farmyard manure. Machinery I put at 3s. 4d. to 3s. 6d. an acre., I have spent £10 or £12 a year during the last 14 years, including new ploughs, etc., the greatest item was an oil engine costing £100. Rates and taxes 4s. per acre.

Annual
Outgoings.

918 Local Rates.

14 years ago the Poor Rate was 1s. 2d., and the District Rate 1s. 10d., now they are 2s. 4d. and 4s. 6d. Before the Agricultural Rates Act the house was rated at £20, in the District Rate the land only paid on $\frac{1}{4}$ after the £20 for the house, but under the Agricultural Rates Act farm buildings are included, increasing the rateable value to £33 10s., on which I have to pay 2s. 4d. besides 1s. 2d. on the remainder. The District Rate follows the poor rate, so I have to pay 4s. 6d. in the £ on £33 10s. Thus the relief we got from the Agricultural Rates Act has more than gone in the increased rates. The Education Rate is about 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

Duties.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will not do the farmer much good, but would give us better trade all round, which must be better for the farmers too. Pigs are sold in our market at less than 7s. 6d. a score, and with better trade there would be a better demand, which the farmer would fill. Any benefit derived from taxing imports should go to relieve the rates. The agricultural labourer will not think much about these proposals except at election time. Our Chamber considers these proposals beneficial, and a prohibitive duty on flour would greatly help English farmers in the way of offals, even if wheat were free. Nothing less than 6s. or 7s. a quarter on flour would be of any use. 2s. on wheat would make no difference to the English grower. Bacon should not be exempt any more than beef. They are on exactly the same footing. If maize meal were taxed and maize came in free, I should not object, it would be the same as taxing flour and not wheat. Any increased prices would benefit the tenant, land-owner, and labourer.

914

WITNESS No. 177.

MR. J. H. POWER

(Dairy Farmer, Mount Richard, Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary).

I can give evidence on dairy farming, and the raising of cattle, sheep, pigs and horses, in the district of the eastern border of Co. Tipperary, the western border of Co. Kilkenny, and the northern boundary of Co. Waterford. I just come into the corner. I farm about 200 acres of mixed land.

State of
Agriculture.

Agriculture is in an uncertain condition owing to fluctuations in prices for matured articles. The competition for stores is keen in the spring. In the autumn, when these stores have become beef and we are selling for exportation to England, the markets are flooded with foreign meat and prices go so low that the profit does not represent half the grazing rents, in many instances. At present foreign mutton and beef are coming in to feed the garrisons at Clonmel and Tipperary—an agricultural country bringing in foreign meat. I believe there is an arrangement with the contractor that he is allowed to supply foreign meat on so many days in the week.

915

Dairy Farming.

Dairy farming has become less remunerative owing to the low price for butter. For the last 5 years the average summer price for butter has been 80s. per cwt. This year it has improved. It is worth now 95s. to 100s. per cwt. The improvement in the price is due to no butter coming from Siberia at present, and a shortage from France.

Hog-Raising.

We raise hogs in our district. Prices are very high now, but there is a great shortage in the supply. That was brought about by the price going down so low during the last 4 or 5 years that farmers gave up breeding pigs. This was because of the importation of foreign bacon. At present bacon hogs are 54s., and when they were only 35s. and 36s. the consumer did not gain a halfpenny in the lb. on bacon.

Profits.

The profits on small mixed farms, where the labour is supplied by the farmer and his family, are good. On the big grazing farms the profits have diminished.

Labour.

There is considerable difficulty in regard to labour, the quality being poor, and the supply short. The system of education adopted for the children of small farmers and labourers is too high class, and consequently when the children grow up they are above working as their parents did. They go into the cities and towns, seek to be clerks, typists, &c., and failing this emigrate. A leading legal man in Dublin told me two years ago that a number of fine young fellows were walking about asking for 10s. a week, as clerks. They were prizemen at the intermediate examinations. They could not get employment, and I suppose had to leave the country. All the young healthy labourers emigrate, leaving the sickly and useless ones to be a burden on the rates. At the small station of Carrick-on-Suir, every Wednesday, you see on an average 10 or 12 people leaving for Queenstown—all young boys and girls of the labouring classes, just fit to work in the country. In dairy farming we find it very difficult to get on owing to the scarcity of labour and the reluctance of labourers to milk and attend to dairy stock. It is almost impossible to get people to consent to milk cows, and the principal reason for that is because they will have to do it on Sunday mornings and Sunday afternoons. Ten years ago I could get a number of people; 20 years ago they used to crowd about; now it is impossible to get them and every farmer tells me the same story. A farmer told me that one Sunday morning recently he and his wife had to milk 28 cows, their labourers not having turned up. Women or boys as milkers are so uncertain. I have had some as extra milkers, and often when they did not turn up in the morning I have had to get a horse saddled to ride to another farm for the workmen to milk. I got tired of that and keep only half the number of cows now. Dairies have to be reduced in consequence of the difficulty of the labour.

916

Wages.

The rate of wages of the labourers has been raised 30 % to 40 % within the last 20 years, and the quality of labour has gone down proportionately. About 20 years ago the average weekly wage was 10s. It increased then to 12s. Now you must give from 14s. to 15s. a week in the busy times, or you cannot get labour. Although you pay the man that you keep for the year a regular wage of 12s. a week, you must increase that about 2s. to 3s. a week during the harvesting season to keep them with you. That did not occur 20 years ago. They had their houses and plots and 10s. a week was the highest wage. Now it has increased by 5s. a week. I give a house and milk, a plot of land tilled, and manure, and allow the use of my horses to work it, and 12s. a week, increased to 15s. in the harvest time, to the ordinary labourer. The man who looks after my dairy

stock gets 13s. 6d. a week ; he has a house and a plot of land tilled for him for potatoes, and he gets a quart of new milk a day—that is about 2 gallons in the week, and he also gets some rough firing from the place. He gets nothing to make up to him the extra 3s. the other men get in the harvest time. He is no better paid than the ordinary labourer, but he has some little extras more than the ordinary labourer in the way of milk and firewood.

The change in the condition of agriculture is due to foreign imports. About 20 years ago butter and bacon began to fall in price ; flour was imported ; wheat-growing was given up and mills became idle. There are at least 50 mills derelict and in ruins in the district.

Rents are lower by about 20 %. In Tipperary the average is about 21½ % lower. The grazing lands in our district are worth now about 25s. per statute acre. That would represent something over £2 or £2 2s. or something like that for the Irish acre. In the outlying districts the small agricultural farms average about £1 per Irish acre.

The markets and fairs are suitable and convenient. Railway and steamer rates are exorbitant. To send beasts to Liverpool market from Clonmel is nearly as expensive as to bring them from New York. The rates, freight and expenses come to about 24s. a head.

Where creameries are well managed and succeed, the buying of manures, coal, feeding stuffs and seed at wholesale prices and distributing them amongst members is a great advantage ; also the marketing of eggs and poultry. They get, of course, the best quality of everything, and they get it at the wholesale price. They also get very good prices for their poultry and eggs taken in by the co-operative creamery and put on the market in London.

Agricultural education is carried on principally by experts provided by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, who deliver lectures, visit the farms, and instruct as to the best way of tilling, seeding and manuring. Now they also instruct the children in the schools in agricultural subjects, under the technical education system, which is a great improvement.

Cottages with ½ to 1 acre attached have been built largely within the last 10 years. They are a great improvement as habitations, but often are not given to the proper labourers. I have known cases where useless people, who were merely what they call jobbers (that is people who graze stock along the roads), have got a labourer's cottage. These men never did a day's labour. Another cottage is in the possession of a man who lives in the town and drives cars, and whose wife has a shop. He is no use to the country. The farmers will not give them to the proper people. If they are given to farm workers they are very useful.

In the rural district the rates are normal, and have not increased ; but in the urban districts they have gone up tremendously. At present in the small urban district of Carrick-on-Suir the rate is 7s. 6d. in the £. It used to average at the highest 6s.

A duty of 5s. per cwt. dead weight on imported beef cattle would mean 30s. to 40s. a head extra, which would give our cattle, in autumn, a chance of competing. If there was any prospect of beef being at a standard rate and of holding its price people would grow more barley and more food-stuff. There should be an import duty of about 15s. per cwt. on butter and fat. The head of the largest creamery and butter factory in Co. Tipperary stated that their principal profit was in margarine. They import an enormous tonnage of Russian fat, which costs 3d. a lb. landed in Clonmel. The butter costs them about 8d. per lb., and 2 lbs. of fat and 1 lb. of butter is the mixture for the margarine. That means 14d. for the 3 lbs., which sells out at from 20d. to 21d. He says the principal profit of his butter factory is the profit on the Russian fat. A fair duty on flour would mean that the mills and other enterprises would be started again, and more labour employed. The same applies to all manufactured articles. The new duty would relieve the general tax-payer. In my district the profits on bakeries are so much, and the competition is so great amongst bakers, that they would not raise the price of bread, even if they had to pay 2s. extra for the quarter of wheat or flour ; 2s. less profit to the importer would mean that he would not send so much over. They would grow more wheat here. At present they do not grow any wheat in our district, but if there was any inducement it would be grown, because the country is very suitable. The price of corn depends wholly upon supply and demand, and 2s. a qr. might interfere with the supply by making the profits less. The millers say our wheat is not so suitable for making flour by itself as when mixed with foreign wheat—Canadian for instance—because there is too much gluten and moisture in it, and they require a certain mixture of a wheat grown in a drier country to make a suitable flour. The duty should be put on flour, the manufactured article, and not on the raw material, the wheat. Preferential arrangements by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any change in the character of my farming.

Causes of Change.

Rents.

Markets and
Railway Rates.

Co-operation.

Education.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Local Rates.

Duties.

Effect on Milling.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 178.

MR. JOHN STEVEN

(Dairy Farmer, Purroch, near Kilmarnock).

I farm at Purroch, near Kilmarnock. My business is dairy farming, and cheese making in particular. Of 240 acres, perhaps 40 are in oats, 20 in timothy hay, and 20 in rye grass for fodder, the remainder is pasture.

Agriculture is not so prosperous as formerly ; we are suffering from the low prices of everything we produce, especially cheese. 20 years back best quality cheese was selling for 70s. a cwt. Now the highest price for the best is 56s. Last season's make averages 52s. Seed oats are 20s. per ton lower than last year ; they have been falling for several years. Competition is very hard against us in oats. We seldom grow wheat, even for the straw, but some do so. It is not a wheat country. Rye grass seed is down 3s. a cwt., and timothy 1d. per lb. Milk has fallen too, because many farmers, finding cheese not so profitable, have given it up, and gone

State of
Agriculture.

921 State of Agriculture
—continued.

in for milk, which they send to Glasgow, or retail in the neighbouring towns and villages. No branch of farming, when the price is remunerative, makes such a quick return as milk, but now the increased competition amongst farmers is beginning to be more felt. Milk is our last resource. I cannot hold out a very cheerful view of the position. We began to feel this change about 1880.

Canadian Hay.

We have to compete against Canadian hay which comes to Glasgow and controls the price. It is good in quality and equal to our own, much of it goes to feed hunters, and it is not so dear as it was; it is sold all over Ayrshire and the West Country. The demand is about what it was, but the supply is larger. Hay has fallen £1 a ton in a few years.

Labour.

Labour is not so plentiful as formerly. There is a great difficulty in getting it sometimes, and it is dearer. We used to get young labour, but the children now are kept at school to the age of 14. After that, boys will not take to farm work. They prefer trades instead. There would be a greater inclination to stay on the land if wages were better, and if they had good houses.

Cottage
Accommodation.

The men have to leave when they marry, for the sake of a house. They cannot get one in the country. Therefore they go into the towns. The cottages are provided by the landlord, but the supply is quite inadequate, either because the landlords do not see the need, or cannot find the means. As often as not it is carelessness. On 2 or 3 of the leading estates in Ayrshire the houses are good, and the supply also; but the small landlords generally neglect the houses. These are generally free. They have, as a rule, two rooms and a kitchen, and the proportion of their value in the total earnings is £6 or £7 a year. The old houses are largely stone, the new ones of brick. It would be worth the landlord's while to build houses and for a plain brick house £200 would be ample, £150 might suffice.

922

Wages.

The rate of wages has increased about 20 or 30 % in 20 years.

Local Rates.

Local rates are generally increasing, especially school rates.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates are much the same as they used to be. We pay far more here than in either Canada or Denmark, but this does not affect us much, the matter being taken into account when the farm is taken.

Co-operation.

With regard to market organisation, we have Societies for securing lower prices in manures, feeding stuffs and implements. We have found them advantageous, and they might be made more so. They are beginning to be talked about more, and more are joining those that exist. The movement is in its infancy, but will develop largely.

Colonial Methods.

I visited Canada about 10 years ago, and found better facilities for cultivation than here. The methods are as good in this country as in any in the world, but the conditions are different. In Canada, with large tracts of land to cultivate, it can be done to far greater advantage with the gang and motor plough than with our little fields. Our fields are too small. I have also been in America, and I speak from my own personal experience of the two systems. Assuming both equally well cultivated, I prefer a large farm to a small one. A big farm well farmed with all the advantages of machinery and the aid of science produces more profit per acre than a small one, because it can be worked more economically.

923

Effect of Duties.

The duties proposed by Mr. Chamberlain would certainly benefit farming in general. There would be a better circulation of money, and with improving trade the agricultural labourer would participate in the advantages. I do not think that preferential arrangements with the Colonies would cause me to alter my mode of cultivation. We should not grow wheat, but should produce milk to the same extent as before.

WITNESS No. 179.

MR. W. WHITE

(Dairy Farmer and Breeder, Lockington Grounds, near Derby; representing the Derbyshire Agricultural and Horticultural Society).

I farm 311 acres, 206 grass and 105 arable, that is two-thirds grazing, milk selling and stock raising, and one-third arable. I grow about 60 acres of corn, a good deal of barley and some wheat for straw. I have held my present occupation 12 years, and I have been engaged in farming 30 years.

924

State of
Agriculture.
Dairying.

Agriculture has been going down for years. There has been a decrease in the price of produce. I began to feel these changes 29 years ago. I had a good time the first 10 years, but it has never been so good since.

Dairying has been the most remunerative branch of agriculture, but that has depreciated during the last few years in consequence of railway facilities being opened in the north of the county. This has enabled farmers who formerly made cheese to send the milk to the large towns. Not one-twentieth of the milk that used to be made into cheese and butter is made to-day. In isolated parts of the county, in former years, they all made cheese. The milk trade is really as much overdone as the cheese trade was formerly. The uniform price of milk is 1s. 8d. in winter and 1s. 2d. in summer, with a carriage of 2d. per barn gallon for transit to London—that is 2d. for 17 pints of milk. I think from the outlook the price is more likely to be lower than higher, and should the price of milk fall it will certainly mean a reduction of rent to enable the tenant farmers to cope with it. They might go back to cheese to some extent, but I am afraid a great many of them have forgotten how to make it. Butter and cheese have also fallen very considerably. Where there are facilities for selling milk as we have by our railways to the north, or being near a town, milk affords the easiest and quickest way of turning dairy produce into profit. At present prices we get more out of it than we would from cheese. There is the question of sender's liability. This liability should not exist after the milk leaves the sending station. It is handled by the railway companies and the milk vendor in London, and we have no control over it, so there ought to be a limitation of liability to the station from which it is sent. They do not like the churns to be locked up; I never do so, consequently the milk can be tampered with. I agree that farmers are now entitled to lock their churns if they choose to.

Shire horse-breeding is not so good as it was, and unless we breed the very best class of shire horses we find it very difficult to get a remunerative price. There is not the same demand for the same class of animals. Many of the shire horse-breeders have given it up, and the more who go out of it the less the demand. Shire horse-breeding is not a staple branch of British agriculture. It has been simply a hobby among gentlemen who have tried to excel and to see who could get the best animals. A tenant farmer could produce what is called a London cart-horse worth £60 or £70. The animal would not be of very grand pedigree. This would pay, but the farmers are not doing that class of breeding to any extent. There is nothing like the export business there was for the very highest class. It has become very much reduced of late years, but as we have the mares and must do something with them we must continue breeding. I do not find Belgian horses enter into competition with shire horses. They can put nothing in the place of the shire horse.

Profits, generally, have fallen very considerably. Best beef is not worth more than 6d. a pound where it was worth 8d. a few years ago, and the worst class of cattle are really lower than that. The position with regard to sheep is the same. The majority of the sheep in our neighbourhood go to the market as fat lambs. The price of wool went up lately, but it has gone down again. The highest price I ever made on wool in former days was 48s. per tod, and the lowest has been about 13s. or 14s. The light wools made more than the heavy.

The general effect of this fall in prices has been that, where they have had strong arable land, they have seeded it down. But I am afraid they are not better off now it is seeded. I have been over several farms which lie right away from towns and which are really valueless. You cannot tell whether it is an old stubble field or whether it is a field seeded down to permanent pasture. There is a lot of it which is not worth 5s. an acre.

Foreign competition has been the greatest cause of the failure. The foreigner has the advantage of having very little rent to pay. Whatever he gets is profit. His is virgin soil and requires no artificial manures or anything to keep it productive. We have been labouring under high rented farms and in competing with them we have been over handicapped.

There is a great demand for labour; the railways require men and the railway runs through my farm. But still we have a fair supply of agricultural labour. The shorter hours of employment in towns has been an inducement for the men to leave. In our dairy district they have to milk on Sundays, and in town they get off work by one or two o'clock on Saturday until Monday morning. That is the chief reason. The quality of the labour is not so good as it was. We have some good men, and we get some fair class and medium men. I have no complaint on the ground of labour except that we pay them a little too much. We give them a lot of perquisites. I give all my labourers £1 a week, and they have cottages and something extra on Sunday for milking, and extra pay at harvest time. I consider it is a very good wage. They have potatoes grown on the farm for nothing.

We are very well off for cottage accommodation and have no difficulty whatever.

The question of railway rates is not a matter of great importance in our district. We deliver most of our grain by road—especially the barley. The barley has only to go 3 miles—to Cavendish Bridge. The railway rates make very little difference to us, but they are too high in comparison with what the railway rates are from abroad.

We have a little co-operation for buying and selling purposes, and some are now trying to form a co-operative society. I should be very pleased to see that system developed and carried out. It is what we ought to do.

With regard to agricultural education, we have a college at Kingston-on-Soar to which members of the Derbyshire Agricultural Society send, but I do not think it has been of much benefit, except where a young person from that institution has got an appointment to manage a similar institution somewhere else. My experience is that farmers' sons and daughters who have gone there have only gained false ideas on account of the machinery and appointments being too elaborate for individual farming. They have benefited very little themselves and have been of little benefit to their employers. I have never sent my sons there and should not. I do not see that the system of teaching farming in vogue in Denmark would be of any utility here. We want to find farmers well up to the mark; but I am afraid there is not so much capital on the land as there was 20 years ago.

I spend about 30s. per acre on food stuffs, from 32s. to 32s. 6d. on rent, 30s. on labour, 10s. on manure, 4s. on machinery, and 2s. 6d. to 3s. on rates, including the additional portion in consequence of the new Education Act, which is about 3d. Interest on capital is included.

I have considered Mr. Chamberlain's proposals with regard to duties upon agricultural imports. Manufactures, such as flour, should be taxed. We might derive some benefit through the flour being manufactured here. We should get our offal cheaper, and we should find some work for our millers. There is not so much offal consumed in this country as formerly. Much of the bran is used for tanning purposes instead of oak bark. I should be in favour of taxing wheat highly. I do not attach very much importance to the duty on wheat as I do not suppose it would make much difference whether it is 1s. or 2s. I should not admit any live stock into the country. It is the proper thing to have all killed at the port. If that were not done we should have our country full of disease directly. I do not favour the proposal to re-admit Canadian cattle, and in saying that I express the opinion of my Association. There is something more important than the duties on meat and dairy produce. A great deal of foreign meat is sold in our English market as of home production, and if we could get the meat branded so that the people of this country knew what they were buying it would be a great benefit. There is much sold to the large hotels in this city as English meat, which is nothing but foreign. It comes in here at 4d. a lb., and it is reducing our prices. With reference to the labourers getting any advantage from those proposed duties, I do not think that in our neighbourhood the labourers are suffering at all. I think they are very well treated. Maize ought to come in free. It is a food-stuff that we require. Our Society is quite in favour of a 5 or 7 years' trial of Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy. Assuming Mr. Chamberlain's proposals to be carried out by giving preferential arrangements to the Colonies that would not affect us in our business. I could not change my methods; I have to do what my farm is adapted to.

Shire Horse
Breeding.

925

Profits.

Effect of
Decreased Profits.

926

Foreign
Competition.

Labour.

Wages.

Cottage
Accommodation.

Railway Rates.

927

Co-operation.

Education.

Annual
Outgoings.

Duties.

928

Effect on Labour.

Effect on Methods.

929

WITNESS No. 180.

MR. HENRY OSBORN KING

(Hay, Straw, and Corn Merchant, Farmer, Wolvercote, Oxfordshire).

I farm at Wolvercote, in Oxfordshire, and am also a hay, straw and corn merchant. I occupy 520 acres, mostly grass land. About 150 acres of it which was arable I have laid down so as to avoid the necessity for growing wheat or other corns at a loss. I have a very small proportion under the plough.

State of
Agriculture.

In recent years agriculture has been carried on at a loss generally. The majority of farmers, 30 or 40 miles round Oxford, are on the verge of insolvency. They draw money of their hay and corn dealers, and are forced to borrow of everybody they possibly can. There is no class of farmers that has done any good at all for the last 20 years. Things have gone from bad to worse. I attribute this chiefly to the competition of the foreigner; and as the means of transportation generally increase, the farmers are becoming worse off. A man 30 years ago could make off an ordinary farm about £8 to £10 per acre, to-day only just about half. The natural protection which Cobden always said the British farmer would have in the matter of freights, which would always remain, no longer exists. The present state of things was not contemplated by Mr. Cobden at all. In the first 20 years or so of my life, the price of wheat averaged about £3 a quarter.

930

Barley.

We do not grow the crops we used to years ago; but if we could grow 7 quarters of barley per acre to-day, as I have done, and the same quality as we used to, the value of that barley to-day would be 26s. instead of 48s.; chiefly in consequence of the fearful opposition to agriculture offered by the Brewing Industry. The brewers are the greatest enemies the farmers have, inasmuch as they use foreign barley, because it is cheaper, and other foreign ingredients in place of English barley.

Cattle.

I graze bullocks. I lost very heavily last year by cattle owing to the extremely low price of beef in the autumn. A great supply came in, and all graziers throughout England who sold out in the autumn lost money. People who desire to avoid heavy labour expenses, and who feed cattle on their grass lands, if they sell them fat in the autumn, are bound to lose in these times. A neighbour of mine lost 50s. a head.

Hay and Straw.

All through the first 30 years of my life—about every 4 years the price of hay in England rose to about £5 a ton. Since the bad crop of 1893—when hay rose to £8 a ton in the autumn, and fell to £4 before another crop was grown, in consequence of the foreign supply—we have never had the price of hay remunerative, either to producer or dealer. £3 a ton is remunerative, but the price in the country to-day is £2. I am obliged to buy hay to-day at £2 a ton, and get the farmer to deliver at that, to make any profit at all by it. It is a dead loss to the farmers but they are forced to sell, and the consequence is it keeps coming into the market. The market at the present moment is so glutted that at Westbourne Park this very day (February 6th, 1905) they have stopped all stations sending, there being more than is required for the London customers.

931

Army Supplies
from Abroad.

Farmers have been driven through the loss of capital to sell hay and straw. I have at the present moment 1,000 tons of hay on my farms, accumulated during the last 2 or 3 years, which I cannot sell without a dead loss. The foreigner sends hay to London at a cheaper rate than I can send it from Oxfordshire by rail. He sends so long as he can, and then—the English farmers having held back supplies—the price falls too low for the foreigner, and he leaves the market to us. But the moment there is a rise, in comes his supply again. I am told to-day (at Mark Lane) $\frac{1}{4}$ ths of the straw which our Government buys for the use of the Army comes from France. It comes in free, and we cannot compete, and yet this is entirely in accordance with the present economic ideas prevailing in this country.

Labour.

By grass growing, making hay, and feeding cattle, labour is diminished to such an extent that one can be almost independent of it. The little labour I require is chiefly in the summer time, during hay making, and then men, who are paid fairly well on railways, brickyards and other works, come and work for me in the evenings, and get in my hay, so that I have very little difficulty. I do not employ very much labour, but on my farm it is rather more expensive than on most, because I milk a lot of cows. A good deal of my farm could be put under arable cultivation, and, if I could grow corn at a profit, I should employ more labour, but it would be necessary to make at least 5s. or 6s. a quarter more than the present prices.

Wages.

Wherever I travel—and I travel rather widely—the agricultural labourer is not paid more, generally, than he was say 25 or 30 years ago. The price of day labour rose to 2s. 6d. a day immediately after Arch's agitation, and it has stood at that ever since. Through the year, an agricultural labourer gets about 15s. a week.

932

Education.

I believe in educating the people, and bringing out the faculties they possess, but I think in agricultural districts the labourers' children should be educated agriculturally, and I regard the present curriculum as absolutely wrong. They are educated to become anything but farmer's labourers. Agricultural education can only be gained by experience on farms. A lad cannot learn to milk a cow, cut a hedge, thatch, plough or tie hay in a school.

Local Rates.

The farmer pays an undue share of rates now. Education should be paid for out of Imperial Taxation, not out of the rates. Throughout the district of Woodstock the rates have advanced about 1s. in the £.

Agricultural
Rates Act.

Through the operation of the Agricultural Rates Act, we are paying slightly less. I have received the full benefit of that Act as a tenant farmer.

Annual
Outgoings.

Outgoings per acre on my farm are: rent 36s.; labour 36s.; feeding stuffs 36s.; manure 10s.; and implements 2s. 6d.; Total £6 0s. 6d.

Railway Rates.

There is some preference given to foreign hay and straw. In England we do not steam, or hydraulic-press the hay and straw, but we machine press it; in countries which export to England the hay is called steam, or hydraulic pressed, although much of it is really done by horse power; and in a Railway Rate book the words "Hydraulic, or steam pressed, Class C," "Machine pressed, Class C," practically mean that the former is foreign and the latter English. It is obvious that hydraulic and steam pressed hay and straw will go into a

much smaller compass than machine pressed, but the railways quote the steam and hydraulic pressed to 25 at a minimum rate per truck of 2 tons, while the machine pressed, which is English, goes at a minimum rate of 2½ tons and a great proportion cannot be loaded on the very small trucks provided by the railway companies so as to get 2½ tons on a truck. We cannot steam or hydraulic press hay in little ricks at off-lying fields in England and we require trusses suitable for our markets. I pay about £600 or £700 every month to railway companies for carriage of hay and straw, and I never pay a month's account without a great number of trucks going charged as 2½ tons which really run considerably less, whereas the foreigner sends his at a minimum of 2 tons a truck, and he can put more on with ease, and yet the charge is precisely the same for the same distance. In 1892 every railway company throughout England put up the rates for hay and straw considerably, but they brought them down in the end to 5 % above the old rates, and there they have stood ever since -90% of them. They have only been reduced in a few cases where the railways have come into competition with roads and canals, as, for instance, from Princes Risborough, in proximity to the London markets.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are the best before the country, but I do not think he goes far enough with regard to taxing wheat. 2s. a quarter on foreign wheat, excluding the Colonies, would not be of very much practical service to agriculturists generally. If there were a 10s. duty upon wheat ultimately the consumers would only pay 2s. 6d. of it, because there would be so much more wheat grown in this country that we should require less from abroad. The price of bread is artificially advanced whenever there is anything in the nature of a duty, it is true; the Bakers' Federation of Oxford decided to put up the price of bread because of the 1s. Registration Duty that Mr. Ritchie put on, but a few bakers, not belonging to that Federation, declined, arguing that the duty made no practical difference. The Federation had to give way. The Registration Duty did not put up the price of bread; bread sunk.

Personally, I do not like the idea of a bounty on wheat. It would be an undue preference to wheat land over barley land farmers.

I think flour should be taxed proportionately with wheat but not to an unreasonably greater extent than wheat. I do not think the miller should have preference over the farmer, who does vastly more than the miller who simply buys the wheat, and grinds it into flour. It is of the first importance that a scheme should be devised for increasing the growth of wheat in the country, though we would certainly not be able to grow the whole of our requirements, and therefore must import a certain proportion. I favour its coming as grain rather than as flour. I am in favour of flour being taxed at a slightly higher rate than the grain. The duty on flour should exceed that on wheat to the same extent as the duty on a fully manufactured article should exceed that on a partly manufactured one. Everything that comes into competition with the articles the farmer produces should be taxed as heavily as possible, consistently with not striking the foreigner such a blow as to hurt oneself in the operation. But I should do it by degrees. It is absolutely useless to attempt to assist the farmer by any tariff alterations, unless a heavy duty is put upon foreign hay and straw. In order to bring it to a remunerative price a minimum tax of 10s. on every ton of straw and hay that comes in would be required. Nothing less can be of any benefit whatever. That would increase the price of hay and straw to the consumer, possibly, to the extent of 2s. 6d.

A 10 % tax on machinery made in the United States would have no appreciable effect on farming. We have everything to make machinery in England, and do not want to get it from the United States. The protected home market, if owned by the English machinery manufacturer, would enable him to increase his output, and thus reduce his cost so that there would be practically no increased cost to the farmer at all. The amount a farmer spends annually on new machinery is not really worth mentioning.

We want immediate relief for the present state of agriculture. Let the landlords have some advantage. They need it surely as much as the farmers, if anything. The poor landlords cannot afford to keep their buildings or houses in order. I think Mr. Chamberlain's scheme is calculated to re-populate the agricultural districts.

WITNESS No. 181.**Written Evidence.**

MR. EDWARD PIGG, JUNR.

(Farmer, Furneaux, Pelham, Buntingford, Herts.).

A petition was sent to Mr. Chamberlain signed by 362 farmers in this neighbourhood requesting a duty on all imported hay, straw and peat-moss litter as, owing to foreign competition and the alarming increase of motor and electric power in London, it can no longer be produced at a paying price; also that a much heavier duty be put upon flour than upon wheat and that the duty on corn should be more than that proposed by him.

My own suggestions are that 2s. per cwt. should be put upon flour, 1s. per cwt. on wheat and barley, and 4s. per cwt. on meat imported from all foreign countries and half these amounts on that imported from our Colonies, and that all other corn and feeding stuffs should be admitted free. Imported linseed oil should also be taxed as, owing to the low price of it, linseed cake cannot be made in this country except at a high price.

WITNESS No. 182.**Market Gardening.**

MR. HERBERT KING

(Farmer and Market Gardener, Broom, near Biggleswade).

I represent the Biggleswade and District Trade and Agricultural Association.

I am a farmer, seed grower, market gardener, and a producer of vegetables in brine. I occupy 3 farms, together about 1,150 acres, 900 acres are under onions, cauliflowers, gherkins, red cabbage (for pickling), Brussels

Duties.

Bounty on Wheat.

Machinery.

937

sprouts, potatoes, turnip seed, scarlet runner beans, mangold seed and special cereals. The remaining 200 are grass, devoted to the breeding of sheep and shire horses. These proportions are subject to variation. Farming in my neighbourhood is conducted on these lines entirely. The land 2 miles round Biggleswade is wonderfully good. Some farmers pay as much as £6 an acre rent for it.

State of Agriculture.

Sheep have paid very well this year, but sheep breeding is not so good as it was. The price of ewes has gone up and on low-lying grass we are obliged to buy every year as we are very apt to get fluke. Everything I grow, except the vegetables I put down in brine, is for seed. I grow mustard. I never put anything on the land after it for wheat, barley or oats. I use many thousand sacks of soot for seeds, in a year, and it answers well. About 1890 the price of onions, etc., fell heavily, but the consumer has not benefited in the least, he pays the same price for onions as 20 years ago. None of these branches have been really profitable since before 1890, and most have depreciated. Onions have fallen from 10s. to 20s. per hhd. with a very limited demand, reducing the return by pounds per acre. Gherkins, once a big industry with us (I have often grown 1,000 hhds.), have only a limited demand at 5s. per hhd. less. Brussels sprouts, potatoes and all green vegetables return quite £5 per acre less. Turnip seed has fallen in value £10 an acre in the last 10 years, mangold seed in the same proportion. I farm my land very highly for potatoes and have to go to great expense for the purpose of getting the seed. The method of culture is expensive, but sometimes it has paid very well. Our farmers are doing very badly this year; neither potatoes nor Brussels sprouts (our staple winter crop) are making anything. The present low price of Brussels is not so much the fault of foreign competition, of which, just at the moment, there is none, though we are seriously threatened with it, as of the bad trade resulting from the largely reduced spending power of the people. There is no demand for our stuff at Biggleswade, nor money to pay for it. My experience in recent years is that the profit in a good year is so small that it leaves no margin to cover the losses of a bad one, consequently these have to come out of capital.

938

Dutch Competition.

The competition I have to deal with is practically limited to Holland, Belgium and France; that from N. Holland is the most severe. Until 10 or 15 years ago practically the whole of the English onion supply was grown in the district of Biggleswade, except those grown at Rainham by Mr. Swan. To-day the industry of Biggleswade has been crushed, practically out of existence, by the competition of the Continent. In Holland they pay £5 per acre rent for land to grow these onions, the average of the Biggleswade district is certainly not more. On the whole, the Dutchman pays more for his land than the Englishman, but we cannot compete because of the difference between the labour and the rent. In Holland they spend an enormous amount of labour on the onion crop, but it is not paid for in money because the small holder works himself and is paid or otherwise by the resulting crop. This is why onions, which at one time made 65s. and 70s., are selling to-day at 55s. Mustard has made 4s. a quarter less this year, though an equal sample with other years. Hitherto we have been exempt from competition, now we have to reckon with the Continent. The same applies to turnip seed. Again, if France gets a big crop of mangolds, as last year, it flushes the market so that we cannot sell ours.

939

Foreign Methods.

Four years ago I was sent by the Board of Agriculture to Holland, but I saw nothing at all different from our methods except that all the work is done by the father, mother and children; that is the root of the competition. Our farms are big, our labour very costly, and we cannot do the whole thing ourselves, even if we would. Their farms are small, many of them their own property, therefore they have every incentive to get the most they possibly can out of them. If the land does not belong to the farmer, the "West Lands" Co-operative Society will let land which will grow anything at about £5 per acre. Nearly all the competition that we have to meet is of this kind.

Labour.

The labour on my kind of farming works out at about £8 per acre, and gives a great deal of employment. £8 an acre for labour looks ridiculous, but I am growing Garston's cross-bred cereals, which are all new, for seed—I select it for them, and it costs me some hundreds of pounds, which in ordinary farming would be saved. Labour is not too plentiful; the tendency is to do less—very much less—and that not so efficiently; to work shorter hours, and to demand more money, particularly in busy seasons. The change has been gradual but has been specially felt in the last 10 years. The effect of the fall in prices has been the curtailment of all work on arable, the employment of fewer hands, everything not absolutely necessary being left undone, and too much cutting down of general expenses for the present and ultimate good of all connected with agriculture.

Wages.

Ordinary wages have increased a little; piecework has increased from 30 to 40 %, for skilled men who work well.

940

Cottage Accommodation.

Better cottages have replaced bad ones, but not to the extent necessary. In most of our villages the cottages are very bad. If the people were better housed more would stay. They have a rood of land with their cottage, but no dung to put on it, and as there is no provision for getting it, they cannot make the best use of the little they have.

Education.

Agricultural education has been attempted by the County Council but has proved a failure.

Local Rates.

Rates are rising owing to sewerage and water supply schemes.

Agricultural Rates Act.

We obtained the full advantage of the Act, and this was considerable, but the County Rate increases and the benefit disappears. Both my landlords are very good to their tenants, and this is generally the case in the district.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent 26s., labour £8, feeding stuffs £2 15s. 2d., manure (London dung principally) and artificial manures £1 0s. 3d., machinery 2s. 2d., and rates and taxes 3s. 6d. all per acre; total £13 7s. 1d.

Co-operation.

We have no system of co-operation in this district. Buying and selling are done by agents principally. Market organisation is unchanged. The Board of Agriculture have been trying to get some 20 of the gardeners on one of the small estates to amalgamate and send their produce to London together, but have given it up in disgust, the men did not appreciate their efforts.

These generally are too high and favour foreign produce—e.g., potatoes from Rotterdam or Hamburg via Harwich for London pay 12s. 6d. a ton; another steamship company charges 8s. a ton, delivered to vans at St. Katherine's Wharf, with a rebate on large consignments. I estimate, therefore, that the G.E.R. charge 4s. 6d. per ton from Harwich, our charges for the same being 6s. 3d. per ton for 5 ton lots for 41 miles, with no rebate. Rates should be so much per ton per mile irrespective of competitive lines, and whether British or foreign produce; any advantage should be ours. Perishable articles are put on rail and forwarded immediately on arrival in London to avoid damage by delay. A great deal more is charged for onions than anything else as perishable articles; they should be charged less than some other things which stand on the rail three or four days together, without hurt. Rates for Continental onions are about 50 % of those on English, i.e., about 4s. a ton difference. An average crop in Bedfordshire in a favourable year would be 12 tons per acre, so that 4s. per ton in the railway charges mean 48s. an acre of handicap here. Exactly the same thing applies to potatoes. The railway companies have curtailed the time for loading and clearing, insist more strictly on full demurrage charges, and have added many other trifling impositions.

Railway Rates.

941

Just to the extent that Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would increase the price of farm and market-garden produce would the grower be benefited. In fairness to the British grower countries sending goods which can be produced here should have such taxed, if they tax ours—the Colonies included, if they do not give preference rates; but, if consistent with revenue necessities, we should let in free what we cannot grow or manufacture ourselves. I do not see the force of letting the Colonies in free. They ought to help pay our taxes, but make the foreigner pay more. If agriculture benefits the labourer will benefit, his share being determined by the ordinary laws of supply and demand. A duty on maize would make lower price barleys worth a little more money. If we made 25 % more on our barleys and rough wheats we could afford to pay a duty on maize. The yield is so enormous that a 10 % duty would not prevent it being sent. Free maize would benefit the brewer, but not the poor man, who does not use it. The duty on brine goods should be 6s. a hhd., i.e., 25s. a ton; 5 % would be no use at all, we should be worse off than we are to-day; 15 % is nearer the amount. We are not only suffering from foreign competition, but from the shortness of money at home, and this because we buy a large percentage of our requirements abroad, and put our money into the output of foreign labour, whilst our own is unemployed.

Duties.

Effect on Labour.

942

WITNESS No. 183.

MR. GEORGE MILLER

(Of the firm of J. & G. Miller, Market Gardeners, Fruit Farmers, and Herb Growers, Mitcham, Surrey; nominated by the Market Gardeners', Nurserymen's, and Farmers' Association, Covent Garden).

943

I can give evidence on corn, hay, roots, market gardening, culinary and medical herbs and distilling essential oils, such as lavender, peppermint, camomile, pennyroyal, rosemary, &c. I farm about 1,000 acres in Surrey and Kent. The greater part of that is in fruit and market gardening; we have not grown, on an average, more than 100 acres of corn per year during the past 7 years. We do nothing in dairying. We have only between 70 and 100 acres of grass land. We employ a number of horses and motor engines for taking the stuff to the London markets. We grow strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries, black currants, apples and pears, but more bush fruit than we do apples and pears. We have 50 or 60 acres of top fruit.

Apples and pears are a good crop this year. Last year there were not many. They did not fetch very high prices, but still we should not say that there was a loss on top fruit. The foreign importations of apples have suffered very much from our having a very good apple harvest. Most of our fruit goes up to London. We do not send to the Midlands. It is the case that directly we have very plentiful crops they become too numerous to be disposed of in London. I have heard it said that London, when there is a plentiful supply, is the worst market in the Kingdom. I do not know if it is so.

State of Agriculture.

There is more foreign competition in lavender than in most things that comes to this country. We get the best French lavender over for $\frac{1}{4}$ the price at which ours can be produced. We do not allow that it is so good. Mitcham has been renowned for lavender water. Epsom is included in the district called Mitcham, but there are one or two other districts in which lavender is grown—Hitchin in Hertfordshire, Grove Ferry, near Canterbury, and one or two places near Woking; but Mitcham is the principal producing district.

Lavender.

944

The fall in prices commenced about 1885. The fall in the price of corn affects us, because many are now growing what we call market garden produce who would be growing corn, if it would pay them to do so. If wheat were 40s. a quarter the farmers would return to wheat growing. The gradual loss of capital and increased cost of labour have caused bad farming and consequently bad crops, resulting in the Bankruptcy Court. Quite 50 % of the small holders have either failed or given up farming, being unable to make it pay. Within a radius of 3 or 4 miles I can count 30 owners who were in the business 30 years ago, and now neither they nor their families are in the business. Some have gone into other businesses and some have gone abroad.

Causes of Change.

Profits in all branches have been very small during recent years, owing partly to bad seasons, but principally to reduction of prices through foreign competition. The increase of local and imperial burdens also reduces the profits. We have not made any interest on our money during 1903 and 1904. On the average of the previous 7 years we made 4 % per annum on our money, including the capital invested in freehold. This was very small compared to what we earned years ago, and we are considered practical and successful. We have been successful in this particular business.

Profits.

945 Labour.

We employ a large amount of labour, our business being very expensive in this respect. We dig perhaps 150 acres in the course of a season with the spade; but all market garden crops, which are technically called little crops, require more than five times the amount of labour ordinary farming does. We can generally get enough labour, but much of it is very inferior.

Wages.

We pay rather high wages in Kent and Surrey. We are in an urban district and wages are generally higher there than in a country district. This is on account of the number of gardeners, &c., employed in villas and country houses near London, and the works generally going on—road making, sewer making and such like—which take away many of the men. The lowest we pay any able-bodied man is 20s., at all our places, either in Kent or Surrey, but we pay some as much as 28s. and 30s. We pay a good many, what we call our best ordinary men, 24s. a week—4s. a day. In the summer time we do more than half the work in piecework. Then the wage is higher, but I am speaking of day pay now. There has been a rise of about 20 % on the wages.

Education.

Boys are now kept at school longer and very few of them learn agricultural work, and they do not care about it either. That will be one of the great draw-backs when we get better trade in the country. Should wheat growing become profitable it would be difficult to get labour unless at a very much higher price than has been paid up to the present. The children remain at school longer, and are better educated than they used to be, so they look for something different to working on the land. We shall never get the people back to the land to work unless they are working for themselves. I think those boys who intend to work on the land would grow up better agriculturists if they left school earlier.

946 Local Rates.

Rates in Carshalton are just a fraction over 8s. in the £, which works out at about 14s. per acre. These are chiefly for sanitary purposes, education and police.

Annual Outgoings.

Our average rent is 26s. per acre, our lowest rent being 14s. and the highest 60s. The 14s. land is chalk subsoil, in some of which the chalk is near the top. The land at 60s. is fruit land, and for small pieces—perhaps a field of from 10 to 20 acres. We paid for insurance under the Workmen's Compensation Act on £9,565 wages in 1902, and on £9,590 in 1903, which works out at £8 14s. per acre. This does not include assistant managers' and clerks' salaries, which would make it about £9 10s. per acre. Our business needs a lot of managing. We build our own wagons and carts and do all our own repairs and that is included in the wages and makes our labour bill large. We produce perhaps 10 to 15 tons per acre of produce, and sometimes more, and that wants a lot of carting away and it quickly wears out the vehicles. We keep about 40 horses, but we have steam ploughing tackle and agricultural ploughing engines, which represent a good many horses, and also 2 motor engines for taking the stuff to London markets. We have no feeding stuffs except for the horses, as we do not keep any other stock. Manure averages £5 10s. per acre. We use a good deal of artificial manure, but our largest expenditure is in dung. Machinery, horses, and tackle of all sorts cost about 10s. per acre, including new purchases to keep it up to the standard so that we should have sufficient to do our work. Rates and taxes come to 14s. per acre.

Duties.

947

Effect on Farming.

Under Mr. Chamberlain's proposals the whole of the producing industries of the United Kingdom will gradually improve. Work will become more plentiful, consequently wages must gradually and permanently rise. That would apply to everything in the country. Preferential arrangements by this country with the Colonies would not require us to make any changes in the character of our farming, except that we might grow less corn and hay. Many who now grow market garden crops would grow corn and hay instead, and consequently our own productions would improve in value, more especially as the general trade of the country improved. We always find our trade better when the trade is good in the country. Small holdings would extend slowly. This would be a great boon to the country, especially politically, by inducing a larger population to settle on the land thus producing a stronger and healthier race of people for our towns and our Army and Navy to recruit from. Peasant proprietorship, with protection, would be a grand thing, without protection a disaster. My experience has been that under the present fiscal laws it is and has been the small holders who have gone to the wall first; even in allotment holders I have noticed this. I remember more than 40 years ago they took in a part of the common, and let each man in the parish have a small piece—10 to 20 poles. I lived to see one man, who had originally about $\frac{1}{2}$ of an acre, ultimately get all the other portions, and now I have seen a neighbouring farmer get the whole lot laid into his farm. Rates, taxes, insurance premiums and other burdens are continually increasing upon the home producers of nearly all articles. For any country to remain prosperous there must be prosperity in its production. If home production is to bear any burdens or pay any market tolls, all foreign production should bear a part of the same, thereby reducing the tax on home producers. This would not necessarily increase the cost of living to the whole community. The community could be relieved to the extent of half the expense of carrying on the business of the country if half the expense were raised on foreign production, and thereby could afford to pay a little more for all articles of consumption without increasing the total cost of living. The result would be improvement in the position of the home producers, increased home trade, which would create a demand for more labour, consequently higher wages, and prosperity all round.

Effect on Taxation.

948 Effect Generally.

WITNESS No. 184.

MR. JOSEPH ROCHFORD

(Fruit Grower, Turnford, near Broxbourne, Hertfordshire).

I grow tomatoes, grapes and cucumbers in about equal proportions. I have 80 acres, 35 covered with glass houses for fruit only. I commenced business in 1882, increasing the acreage yearly until 4 years ago.

State of Agriculture.

About 1,150 acres have been put under glass in England (nearly all within the last 20 years), employing 7,000 hands, representing £368,000 in wages. Wall fruit is better than tree fruit. Fruit grown under glass is usually better than out-door fruit because we can give or withhold water, and do what experience teaches

bring it to perfection and give it the best flavour. Best foreign fruit is not as good as best English, because the latter usually grows on walls or under glass. Business has not increased during the past 4 or 5 years, it is almost stationary now owing to low prices, which leave very little profit. This fall is due chiefly to the rapid development of the industry in this country, the overstocking of the market, and foreign competition. We suffer during summer and autumn from increasing importations of tomatoes and Belgian grapes. The quality is inferior to ours, but fairly good and they satisfy many people. Prices have fallen 40 % in the last 10 years and are lower this year than before. Many smaller growers near London are almost bankrupt, some have given up. The industry is at a deadlock. Any further fall would close many inexperienced growers who are not getting as much profit as they should, partly through their own fault. Those who understand their business can still get a small profit but much less than formerly, consequently we cannot afford to increase our glass houses. The business would have developed further but for foreign competition, which has greatly lowered the price of tomatoes, and is very much lowering that of grapes. That, with the over-building of glass houses, has brought about the present deadlock. French grapes are imported free but our grapes are taxed in France, greatly handicapping our export trade. But for the duties we should send many grapes to France. The Belgians would if we did not, they are sending more grapes into London than the English growers. From now till the end of the season only 70 tons of English grapes are coming to market, and 100 tons of Belgian are expected. Nearly all our produce goes to Covent Garden by road in vans, lately in motors which are becoming common. We sometimes send a little to Manchester—the rate is rather high. We do not sell our fruit but send it to a commission salesman. This is always satisfactory. Nearly all nurserymen growing under glass for Covent Garden market send to one salesman, who charges generally 10 %, finding all baskets and taking all risks of bad debts.

I employ about 180 hands on 35 acres. Open land, fields and standing ground require little labour. **Labour.**
We get an intelligent class of unskilled labour without difficulty.

Formerly we paid ordinary labourers 18s., now 21s. or 22s.; nursery hands or gardeners formerly 21s., **Wages.**
now 25s., a rise of 15 % to 20 %.

Our County Council have held technical classes for years, but without doing much good, it is a job to get **Education.**
the men to attend.

Cottage accommodation has been a difficulty, but lately there has been sufficient. We have many houses **Cottage**
let at less than average rent. We have built and are letting six-roomed cottages at 5s. 6d. to 6s. 6d. The **Accommodation.**
usual rent is 8s. We are within the London district, where builders get Trade Union wages which makes rent high.

We have no co-operative purchasing and selling but there are carriers who call at the nurseries and **Co-operation.**
collect small lots, to forward together.

Rates are increasing steadily.

Labour costs £11,000, and fuel £7,000 a year on 35 acres under glass. Rent assessed at £60 an acre; **Local Rates.**
manure £25. Machinery is very little, only a few gas engines and pumps. We keep 14 cart horses and also **Annual Outgoings.**
hire some. £1,950 a year is the cost of conveyance of produce, manure and fuel. Rates £9 15s. 0d. per acre, taxes **951**
£2 17s. 0d. Rates and taxes on our other land are nominal.

A tax on imported fruit would tend to raise the price of produce here but would not develop our industry **Duties.**
because wages and all the materials we use would be dearer, and the working man would benefit more than the employer. When labour is plentiful it is cheaper, and we get the pick of the men, but when it is scarce, we have to take loafers and riff-raff, making labour dearer without wages rising. Under protection wages will rise, and we shall have to pay much more for better labour, or put up with worse. On the whole, I favour the proposal, because it would benefit the majority.

WITNESS No. 185.

MR. CHARLES STEEL

(Fruit Grower, Ealing, representing the Market Gardeners, Nurserymen and Farmers' Association, **952**
Covent Garden).

I have been in the market garden trade since the year 1850. These last few years I have not been much **State of**
in it. I found I was losing money through foreign competition. When leases were out I did not renew them. **Agriculture.**

Market gardening is much more extensive now than 20 years ago. Thousands of acres now under **Local Rates.**
vegetables ought to be under wheat, neither can be grown at a profit. I sold my last wheat for 56s. a quarter **Duties.**
and bread at that time was 6d. or 7d. a loaf. Now wheat is 30s. and the loaf 5d. Potatoes formerly £5 a **952**
ton are £2 or 50s., and the price to the consumer is little different from then. Where the farmer is hit 10s. the **State of**
fruitgrower is hit 20s. Wheat grown here is as valuable as wheat grown abroad, but fruit is worth 50 % less, **Agriculture.**
because foreign climates enable it to be brought in 2, 4, or 8 weeks before ours, and foreigners get the best of **Local Rates.**
our market. The cost of transit to foreign produce is often much less than ours whilst the market charges **Duties.**
are the same.

To put ourselves on a level with the foreign grower either we should get more for our produce or our **Local Rates.**
cost of production should be decreased by removing some of the rates and taxes on our land.

I have considered this question for 30 years. For 10 years I thought other nations would see the wisdom **Duties.**
of free trade. If they did not I knew it must come to ruin or protection for market gardening and fruit growing. **952**
We want to make food cheaper by taking duties off things consumed and taxing manufactured goods. We **State of**
have duties on wrong things. I would not tax tea and tobacco on which people with incomes under £4 per **Agriculture.**

953 Duties—continued.

week spend more money than on bread. I would not tax wheat unless forced to do so, I would tax flour and all manufactured articles. A 1s. tax on wheat will not be popular unless it is explained that 2s. is taken off something else. To make our wheat land profitable and get the people back to the land, bounties should be given (from revenue derived from imported manufactured articles) to make the price of home-grown wheat equal to 40s. per quarter. If a further small bounty were paid on 2-year-old wheat, it would encourage farmers, and render unnecessary the suggested huge national granaries as a war reserve. Wheat cannot be kept in granaries for long without becoming musty and weevily. I desire a tax on fruit and market-garden produce which is hit much harder than ordinary agricultural produce and should pay a bigger duty, 10 % would not be too much nor would it restrict imports. This tax must benefit the grower who cannot produce at present prices. There is a great anomaly between wholesale and retail prices. If a duty on fruit and vegetables did not increase the cost to the consumer the grower would require a reduction of local taxation from funds derived from the tax. Importers ought to pay all our taxes. They have our markets and pay nothing towards their cost.

WITNESS No. 186.

Fruit.

MR. JOHN IDIENS

(Market Gardener and Fruit Grower, Wickhamford Manor, Evesham).

954

State of
Agriculture.

I grow all kinds of fruit and vegetables. The acreage cultivated is 268 acres. I have been mixed-farming since 1874, and have grown fruit since 1887. The acreage under fruit and vegetable cultivation in my district has much increased since 1879. Cultivation is greatly improved, and more scientific and uniform than formerly. We have copied California and Canada. We send our produce to jam makers, to our wholesale depots, and to commission salesmen, besides selling direct to the public in small quantities through the post. A "cash on delivery" system would help us materially. We have depots in Bristol, Bournemouth, Cheltenham, Gloucester, and Blackpool. Profits have increased through improved distribution. Rent varies from £1 to £8 an acre for the best ground. £5 is the average in Evesham. In the Vale £3 is the maximum. Very heavy clay land not worth 5s. an acre for wheat growing is adapted for fruit and vegetables, especially asparagus, hundreds of acres of which have been put down. This heavy land is turned over with forks in the autumn, and the frost pulverises it down. The land contains salt, especially suiting it for asparagus, which grows with a little soot without stable manure. The industry is more prosperous, and the land better cultivated than for the last 20 or 30 years. Seasons have been better, particularly the last. There are few farms within 6 miles of Evesham, except fruit farms. Fruit culture has extended rapidly since 1870, and is capable of indefinite expansion as the population increases. The soil is not always suited for plum growing, which requires a better aspect 200 feet above sea level. Clay land (avoiding low hollows where the frost drops) is particularly suited for apples, which colour better in Worcestershire than anywhere else. You cannot over-do the English market with good apples. Until 5 years ago we did not cultivate them, but now our little men are finding them more profitable than any other fruit, and if the aspect is well chosen the frost does not affect them like plums. Formerly we planted apples in grass orchards, but for the last 8 to 10 years the ground has been cultivated with forks, and kept clean. The trees are put down 20 to 25 feet apart with garden crops and strawberries between. Apples are similarly cultivated in Cambridgeshire, but not such good quality or colouring because of the different subsoil. The colouring depends on the clayey subsoil and the constituents of the soil. Our soil contains much lime and potash, which apples want. Barely 10 % of fruit grown in English grass orchards is fit for market, 90 % is only fit for cider and jam. Apple growing is increasing rapidly. It has increased tremendously in the last 10 years and we have not overstocked the market except in a season of glut. The demand has grown with the supply, and will continue. The more it is encouraged and developed the more labour will be employed. Varieties of apples grown in our district include Worcester Pearmain, Lane's Prince Albert, Early Victorias, Newton Wonders, and Grosvenors. Cox's Orange Pippins do not grow well on clay land, Bramley's Seedling is not profitable the first 5 years. Ribston Pippins are very rare, because of slow growth and uncertain crop. With improved distribution we should be able to find a market for our well graded selected apples, in the face of increased imports. We have cold storage too. Tasmanians, which are very good apples, come in when ours are practically finished, ours have 6 months first. American apples hit us sometimes, but they do not get a crop every season, and often they have plenty when we are short. The price of plums is £6 to £10 per ton. Egg plums are our chief variety. We also grow Victorias, Prolifics, Czars, Monarchs, Herons, and Early Orleans. The Yellow plum is a public favourite. It is grown extensively and used by jam makers in every town with 8,000 to 10,000 population. There are very few pears, clay does not suit them. We have prevented a repetition of the insect pest of 20 years ago by greasing plum trees. Our small growers recognise the importance of fighting codling moth and apple psylla by spraying.

955

956

Small Holdings.

In 1870 small holders held 2,000 acres within 8 miles of Evesham, now 2,400 cultivate 15,000, averaging 1 to 10 acres each. These holdings increase every year. Very few holders own the land, some own the houses; they have practically all started as working men who rent the land, plant it with fruit trees and retain the tenant right, spending considerable capital in doing so. Land practically derelict 20 years ago was taken by working men at £1 per acre in 2 and 3 acre lots for growing asparagus. Many now hold 6 acres, they own their houses, and some of them have sufficient means to support them for life. The Market Gardeners' Compensation Act is a failure with small holdings; a land-owner will not let under this Act, but signs a yearly agreement with a clause that if he gives notice to quit he shall pay the same compensation as under the Act. A man takes bare land at £2 per acre, in 4 or 5 years time his tenant right is £50 per acre, and he considers himself perfectly safe under this agreement. There are always men ready to go in and pay to out-going tenants the tenant right, which should never be in the landlord's hands. Small holders grow strawberries extensively, especially near Hereford and Ledbury, chiefly for preserving. There are very few black currants grown in England on account of the mite and frost. Asparagus is usually grown on a sandy soil, but this rich loamy clay land is more suitable. Asparagus is not expensive to grow, and a man can get a good living

and keep his family on 2 to 3 acres. It pays better than any other produce. The growers do all the work, starting as labourers, then beginning with 2 acres and getting it clean and well cultivated — the wives and youngsters tying up asparagus when cut. Then they gradually get 6 or 10 acres and build a cottage. The asparagus grown was first a very old sort, but is now Palmetto — an American variety. They grow asparagus from seed, wait 2 years for the roots, and then transplant. Only ordinary cultivation is required. A few years ago we had a blight caused by continuous dryness, and asparagus failed, putting much land out of cultivation, but after a few wet seasons asparagus is again cultivated extensively. Small holders sell principally in our two good markets where buyers come from the country. Some local dealers circularise small towns and buy in the market as they receive orders. Asparagus is graded in the local market which is more remunerative than sending to London.

Imported fruit and vegetables makes a difference to our prices. Large quantities of German, Dutch and Belgian vegetables are brought here at extremely low sea freights. The exports from Germany to Great Britain (as given in German official returns) are as follows:—

Imported Fruit.

	Plums.					Other Stone-fruit.				
	Tons.					Tons.				
1900	..	..	..	..	3,147	..	..	..	..	1,214
1901	..	..	..	..	969	..	..	..	..	894
1902	..	..	..	..	9,794	..	..	..	..	180

Imported plums have not affected the market lately owing to the increased vigilance of sanitary authorities, who condemn many German plums, which go long distances through Germany and are brought in 6 to 8-ton trucks loose and put into baskets at Rotterdam. Very often they sweat and arrive in bad condition. Frequently they become unwholesome by having to wait at the port for shipping accommodation. Continental fruit pulp has been more largely imported since the increased seizures of foreign fruit. The English soft-fruit trade is damaged much by foreign pulp being sold as English. It is inferior and much cheaper, but indistinguishable from English in jam. Fruit comes in claret casks from Germany, &c., principally with acid and sulphur preservatives, which keep it for a month or two. It is not marked "foreign fruit," it is sold here much below good English. It goes into jam sold as best English.

We have plenty of good labour. The men are contented, and do not leave for large towns, although wages are much lower in the country. We import much labour when busy, but ordinarily local labour is sufficient.

Labour.

Wages have increased 1s. to 2s.

Wages.

We are badly off for cottage accommodation, specially in some villages, but building is being begun on 20 % cheaper lines, and the cost of cottages will soon be greatly reduced. Eight cottages are being built in Evesham, and 100 applications have been made for them already. Rents are very high.

Cottage Accommodation.

Co-operative methods of purchase and marketing have started, and are progressing with farmers, but very slowly in marketing fruit. We have a small society in its infancy, requiring much organisation and finance.

Co-operation.

Rates and taxes are very heavy. They have increased double, principally through education, general and county expenses. Complaints of education rates are general, and some relief must be given if the land is to be cultivated. It is a great injustice that men who till the soil should have their raw material so taxed. Education should be paid for by Imperial funds.

Local Rates.

We are materially injured by imported fruit and pulp, but not by plum pulp, on which a tax of 7s. per cwt. was imposed by Customs when the Sugar Duty was framed, and now enters under the head of prunes. Two years ago 1,000 tons of plum pulp was packed in Bosnia, and a large quantity in Holland. On learning of the tax the holders found it impossible to ship here; 25 tons from Canada were thrown away. The home cultivation of plums would have greatly decreased, land would have fallen in value and hundreds of men would have had no employment on the land but for this tax, which (combined with the Sugar Convention) has increased the value of plum orchards 25 %, and replanting will commence, although stopped 3 years ago. I have bought at 30 years' purchase a farm to plant out next season. Formerly I would not have bought land for plum growing. At present this farm employs 2 men—for fruit growing and market-gardening 20 to 25 men and 12 cottages will be wanted. Fruit pulps such as raspberry, black currant, strawberry, &c., command 3 times the price of plums, and should be similarly taxed. Plum jam is taxed 7s., but other jams 3s. or 4s., i.e., only on the sugar used. The duty should be the same. We can grow in this country and our colonies all the soft fruit required for jam making. Raw fruit, correctly so described, should enter free. All fruit treated with any preservative should be taxed 7s. I do not advocate a duty on fresh French strawberries and the best fruit from America and France, because to keep the shopkeepers going a good supply of fruit must be obtainable, and without foreign fruit they could not live. I except Germany, whose new tariff, which will seriously affect us, comes into operation next January. If obtainable, I prefer the open door for fruit. Labour would share in the advantages of these proposals, because there would be more gardening and fruit growing, especially apples and soft fruit. Tinned fruit business is growing here through the duty on plums, which formerly came in free (chiefly from California) and sold at very low prices. The duty, amounting to 1s. 9d. per dozen tins, has enabled English jam makers to extensively tin fruits in syrup. One firm alone did 1,000,000 tins last year. Californian now cost 7s. 9d. a dozen, and ours can be put on the market for 5s. 6d., which helps the Englishman to dispose of much fruit for home and export.

Duties.

Preference should be given to fruit pulp from our Colonies, the quality being A1, specially Tasmanian and Victorian. We do not get much fruit from the Colonies except pulp from Australia, which is as good as English. This trade is supervised by the Government, which issues certificates of purity accompanying the Bills of Lading. British growers need not fear colonial pulp arriving in its normal season, but the German and Dutch season is parallel with our own.

Preference.

MR. GEORGE MONRO

(George Monro, Ltd., Salesmen, of Covent Garden Market, London, and Smithfield Market, Manchester).

I am a distributor of choice English produce, foreign and colonial fruit, and imported produce that cannot be grown in England, or coming at a time when home grown is not in. My business is virtually in home-grown produce. We only keep foreign to fill up gaps. We sell by private treaty anything consigned to us, but do not accept foreign if it comes in contact with home supplies.

State of
Agriculture.

During the last 15 or 20 years there has been a very great increase in home and imported out-door fruits, but a much greater increase in hot-house fruit, tomatoes, &c. Market gardeners able to grow tomatoes out of doors here are very few, and only succeed 1 year in 4 or 5. The trade would have gone if our growers had not erected shelters. Agricultural produce grown under glass has become a tremendous industry, employing thousands of hands. The trade is injured by free entry of foreign fruit. France having greater climatic advantages than any other country, an open market here enables them to sell before the English growers are ready. A full crop of French pears, plums, &c., not only fills the demand for fresh fruit before ours is ready, but French produce keeps a great deal of the trade it gets, partly owing to better grading and packing.

962 Exports.

We take orders from home or abroad, Germany in particular, because they admit most of our goods free. We do business in Germany that we cannot do in France, because of the tariffs and the Consul's certificate. In France we must get a certificate as to origin and freedom from disease. The Minister of Finance has the power to put on an interim duty at a day's notice. We established a profitable outlet for grapes 15 years ago in Paris and were welcomed by the French shopkeepers. It was a great help to our home growers, but a grower at Roubaix approached the Minister of Finance, who put on a duty of 5 francs a kilo (about 2s. per lb.), which stopped us.

Labour.

Our baskets, as far as possible, are made in Bedfordshire. I asked our basket-maker to put up a branch in the middle of the district where they were using the baskets, but he could not because within 20 miles of London union men want 50 % more wages. He could not refuse to employ them. If he took on a non-unionist all the others would leave. The result is that we are losing the English trade, growers go to Holland and France for their baskets. We cannot pay for them 100 % more than our competitors. The unions are getting the upper hand and they ought to be compelled to allow free labour.

Railway Rates.

963

Our railways do not give sufficient attention to the quick delivery necessary owing to the perishable nature of the fruit. Continental States owning the railways offer very great advantages to the growers. In Hamburg, Berlin, &c., fruit is always carried by passenger train at goods rates, and "grande vitesse," at "petite vitesse" rates. British railways have different classifications for various fruit, whereas Continental railways carry all fruit at the same rate. Growers sending produce of 4 different kinds pay 4 different minimum rates, though of the same value, packed in similar baskets, and consigned at owners' risk. This cripples trade because it discourages the sale of large quantities. A grower of melons packs them just like tomatoes, and pays for them twice as much as for tomatoes in exactly similar baskets of the same value and of no greater risk to the railway. Considerable quantities of tomatoes come from the Mediterranean littoral, by railway to Boulogne. The rate per ton is 22s. 5d. Growers within 140 miles of London have to pay more to bring their fruit to London than French growers pay for 800 miles from Marseilles to Boulogne. All kinds of French fruit and produce come into direct competition with ours, and the home growers have to avoid the season when these French goods arrive. Lower rates to encourage export are given by French railways. A French firm a few years ago took over a bankrupt business in one of our northern ports, where they can get cheap freight. They established a London business and now pay 6 % dividend. Their system of organisation with the advantage of climate will cut us out from our own northern markets unless some small tax is imposed on their goods so as to give the English grower his opportunity. A tax on French produce would countervail the bounty French growers get in railway rates. Our railway rates are enormously detrimental to British fruit growers. French railways can give these advantageous rates because the Government have some interest in them, guaranteeing the shareholders, and have power to insist on privileges being given to exports.

Co-operation.

964

There might be some advantage in co-operation, but our produce cannot be levelled up like butter or dairy produce. Growers in a neighbourhood might co-operate in buying and sending larger quantities by railway, but the selection is what we have to consider. Our produce varies. In one consignment of apples some are worth 10 times as much as others in similar baskets from the same neighbourhood, perhaps the same grower. They come from abroad in a more saleable condition in this respect.

Duties.

I should like a duty on all imported fruits that come into contact with home grown—not a duty that would stop goods coming, because a plentiful supply is a necessity, keeping trade going when there is no home produce. In spring we cannot tell whether we shall have a good crop of fruit, and if we had to depend only upon home-grown, probably 50 or 60 % of the retail shops would have to close. Foreign pulp should be taxed or it will seriously affect home-grown fruit. The British public would not object to a fruit duty, they would not feel it at all. Oranges, bananas, &c., cannot be grown here, but soft fruit like greengages, cherries, &c. (mostly from France), can grow here. Climatic advantages enable foreigners to get our markets before our crops are ready. They contribute nothing to our taxes, and get the control of the market by being established before us. When cherries are finished other goods are ready, and when ours come in the novelty of the different sorts of produce has gone. Imported fruits should bear at least the same tax as home grown, thus relieving the home grown of part. This would also help us to find markets abroad, as we grow many things we could sell abroad if markets were open. We can sell in Germany tons of hot-house produce weekly, as against pounds in France. The Minister of Finance would not have dared to put a tax of 5s. per kilo on grapes if we could have retaliated, as the whole *petit cultur* of France looks to England as the best market. The same with America sending fruit here by subsidised steamers. We might tax and derive income from these goods, and

leave an open market for our Colonies, stopping all surplus being dumped here when shut out by other countries' tariffs. Many subsidiary industries are affected by our trade, and a small tax on imports would indirectly benefit them, besides helping the home trade. We get many fine quality strawberries which come up morning—gathered from Hampshire, where there is very suitable land. We have very good arrangements with the Railway Company. A tax on imported fruit would only have the effect of retarding importations when the goods were cheap, and we were able to supply the markets with home produce. A percentage tax would not have the proper effect, a package tax would be much better. It would not hinder the goods at the port at all, and it would act in this way: If cherries were worth 6s., 8s., or 10s. a half-bushel, 1s. would not be felt, but if cherries were down to 2s. or 3s. the package duty of 1s. would be 25 or 50 % of the value. That would help to stop them, and would put on a greater percentage at the time when we had plenty of our own produce. There are thousands of tons of greengages, plums, and apples rotting in a plentiful season here, without an outlet—a tax at that moment would check further importations. I prefer free trade where we can get it, as for instance on goods we cannot grow here. France should be taxed for keeping us out so long. When we attempted to make a business in Paris there were grapes grown under glass coming into Paris from Belgium. Those were taxed, with the result that they were driven here, and have damaged our growers by thousands a year. Belgian grapes are sold here at less price, and delivered in the provinces for less freight, than grapes from London. The same result has followed the McKinley tariff on oranges and lemons, shutting them out of other markets, and forcing them into our markets in much greater quantities. We should still have a plentiful supply if Mediterranean orange and lemon growers had to pay toll for the use of our market. Any tax so levied would be paid by the foreign grower, not by the British consumer, who with fruit from the West Indies, &c., would be always well supplied. Some years ago our Government sent Commissioners to help the West Indies, when America put on a duty of 6s. a barrel on oranges from our Colonies, and we subsidised steamers to bring the fruit here. If American goods had been taxed they would have produced an income instead of being a cost to this country. Fruit-growing would give very much more employment in the country at double the wages obtained by agricultural labourers, besides benefiting many other trades. Most of our baskets are made in England, and they cost us several thousands a year. But Germans, French and Dutch are trying to get that trade, just as they have captured the glass trade. The country was flooded with cheap glass at 40 or 50 % lower than English makers could sell at, consequently English makers have been shut up; and now glass is from 50 to 100 % dearer. I employ 50 men making baskets, but we are being offered baskets at half the price. We cannot keep the trade at these low prices.

I would rather tax foreign oranges and lemons, &c., than give bounties to our Colonies. I would tax everything from a country that shut our goods out, and by doing so we should arrive at universal Free Trade quicker than under the present system. There is a much greater proportion of fruit coming from the Colonies owing to the cold storage method of conveyance. We get oranges from Australia, Jamaica, &c., and peaches and plums from the Cape, which we could not get without cold storage. Under a tariff that trade could be increased. Some foreign fruits are much more appreciated by our trade than those from the Colonies. Canary bananas are the best that come into our market, and we should not tax them in favour of those Colonial bananas which are not so good for the public and the trade. An expert committee should be formed to deal with this question, and when we get far enough to discriminate we should certainly give the benefit to our Colonies.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 188.

MR. JOHN RILEY

(Fruit Grower, Putley Court, Ledbury).

I grow soft fruits and apples, plums and pears; the apples set out, and the others between, in the same orchard, occupying 84 acres, of which I planted 36 from 1879 to 1881, and the rest in the last 4 years.

The industry is flourishing and likely to reach considerable dimensions. We have no glass. I am setting the new plantations out so as to use more horse and less hand labour. I had to give up red-currant growing because of destruction by birds, and the price being kept down by foreign imports. I grow gooseberries in place of currants. I send most of my produce to a jam maker, and sell the rest. Fruit crops vary greatly, but if land is laid out properly it should make ends meet by the fourth year. There are seasons when fruit is very plentiful and we cannot market all we grow, therefore a considerable loss results. Last season when fruit was plentiful, plums were largely imported from Belgium, reducing the price 20 %. Much Belgian fruit is grown on trees planted by the Government, beside canals, roads and railways, and sent here to be sold for what it will fetch.

State of
Agriculture.

I have always been able to get enough labour, but there is room for improvement in quality, and wages are increasing. Last year half our picking was done by local people, the remainder by labour from Ledbury and Hereford. Labour expended on fruit farming is greater and more constant than on hop growing.

Labour.

A co-operative society existed in Hereford three years ago, but failed through bad management. A new society started on Sept. 1, 1905, and secured higher prices than could be got through salesmen. The members sold 40 tons of apples through the society the first fortnight.

Co-operation.

Rates are becoming more burdensome due to highways, education and vaccination. Ledbury Union expenditure, which formerly varied only £300 or £400, has risen in the last 2 or 3 years from £5,500 to £7,644 in 1904, dropping to £7,255 to 1905. The highway rate, formerly 6d. to 7½d. in the £, rose in 1903 to 11d., in 1904 to 1s. 6d., dropping to 1s. in 1905. Much of this rise was due to damage to roads by traction engines, and we got some return in better roads.

Local Rates.

969 Annual Outgoings.

The land before planting was worth 30s. The cost of my planting is about £25 per acre. The cost of labour per acre for the last 7 years has been £15 6s. Last year it was £11 15s. including picking. We have effected a considerable economy by laying out more for horse work and having a larger total area. Manure £3 an acre. Machinery consists of sieves which cost £1 an acre, horse hoes, and 5 or 6 sprayers. Rates are 1s. 8d. in the £ on land, and 3s. 4d. on buildings. It costs over £40 an acre before fruit farming pays.

Duties

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would benefit home growers, and if the acreage under fruit increased, the demand for labour would be very much greater. More wages would be paid to the extent of the difference between 25s. per acre (the cost of ordinary farm labour) and £11 15s. (fruit farm labour). In a plentiful year foreign importation causes large quantities of English fruit to be left unpicked—the consumer would not be affected if the foreigners' were left unpicked and ours went to market.

WITNESS No. 189.

MR. ERNEST SHENTALL

(Fruit Merchant, St. Mary's Gate, Chesterfield).

I am a fruit merchant and a jam boiler in the neighbourhood of Chesterfield.

State of
Agriculture.

During recent years the acreage under vegetables, and root crops, particularly potatoes, has increased. There has not been much increase in the acreage under fruit, except soft fruits, but so far as the supplies affect our market, the production has been greater.

Fruit Imports.

I am aware of the increase in the importation of foreign fruit, and I am also aware of the enormous consumption of fruit generally which has followed the increased importation. I buy a good deal of fruit from Hull, which is a depot for the German, Dutch, Belgian and French fruit. The importation of German and Dutch has decreased in the last few years. When there is an ordinary crop here the importation of plums lowers the price to the home grower considerably. In 1903 English plums were commanding 12s. to 15s. a cwt. The market was suddenly flooded and the price dropped 50 %. A large crop in this country stops, to a great extent, the importation of the foreign, and brings the prices down as much as the foreign importations, and possibly even more. If there were a considerable development of fruit-growing here the foreigner could not make it pay to send his fruit in competition with our own. During the last 5 or 6 years fruit has been much cheaper. I attribute that fall in the prices to increased cultivation at home and to increased importation. Within that period the cultivation of the small fruits, strawberries, raspberries, &c., has increased very much. We only buy apricot pulp. There is a duty on that pulp imported into this country of 7s. or 10s. a cwt. There is also a duty on plum pulp, but none on fresh fruit.

Cheaper Fruit.

971

Profits.

Profits have been according to crops. If we have a fairly good crop, the prices are very low, but on an average the prices are gradually falling. I can give no reason for this. The supply generally rules the price. The influx of foreign fruit in an ordinary season influences the prices to the home grower. If we were buying at 30s. a ton and there was a good crop on the Continent the price would probably fall to 20s. I am not a fruit-grower but a fruit merchant, and so cannot tell the relative advantage a fruit-grower derives from having a full crop and a moderate crop. Probably the net result is very much the same. A really good fruit season does not occur very often, though we have had several lately. Sometimes the frost occurring at an unfortunate time of the year causes the loss of a whole crop, and an ordinary good year following would not repay for the loss. In a good year the only people who benefit are the railway companies.

Labour and Wages.

There is a good supply of labour and the rate of wages generally has increased. Ours is a colliery district and the colliers' wages have increased considerably within the last few years, and that affects the labourers who are employed by us.

Railway Rates.

A great alteration is wanted in the railway rates. The rate for plums from the Evesham district is the same for 100 tons as for 1 ton. There was a large crop in 1900 and I had occasion to ask the railway company to give us a rate for 100 or 200 tons in 4-ton lots, but I got no rate quoted. The ordinary rate for 10 cwts. was 23s. 4d., and when the goods came along they charged us at the same rate for 100 or 200 tons. We objected to pay and ultimately got a reduction to 20s. The railway companies charge different rates upon different kinds of fruit. They are not justified in making this difference. Take a small grower who is sending 10 or 15 cwts. of hard fruit and soft fruit—that is, apples and plums. They will make them up into small lots by dividing the consignment into 2, 3 or 4 different classes. We find that the minimum rate, as between apples, pears, plums and currants, differs, and the answer of the railway companies is that they have greater risks with one variety of fruit than with another. There are really, however, no greater risks as the consignment is carried in one wagon and at owner's risk. We deal largely in potatoes, our source of supply being mainly Lincolnshire. Our minimum rate has been very much reduced since we got the Great Central Railway. Under the Midland Railway from the Boston district it was about 13s. 6d.; now it is about 9s., in 4-ton lots. The rate upon potatoes from Hull is 9s. I understand that potatoes imported *via* Hull are carried on the French and German railways at considerably less than ours from Boston to Chesterfield. Upon the French railways the carriage of potatoes for about 70 miles works out at from 3s. 3d. to 5s. per ton as compared with 9s. on the English railways for home produce. The home farmer is considerably penalised by the incidence of these oppressive rates. The same thing applies to the fruit trade. A railway company takes the same carriage for a ton of plums when the plums realise £15 or £20 as it does if they realise 50s. If the railway companies would take into consideration the appointment of a committee each season to fix the rates on a sliding scale according to the crop, that would help the fruit grower more than anything. A new classification of railway rates is necessary. French railway companies have no classification but carry all kinds of fruit at the same rate.

972

The Derbyshire County Council give lectures on agricultural education, but I do not think much interest is taken in them. **Education.**

The fruit-producing business is terribly handicapped, as compared with the foreigners, by a worse climate. That is a very serious impediment to development but at the same time matters could be improved by better cultivation. The home grower could hold his own if he would grow the fruit. But unfortunately a great many of our home growers do not grow the fruit—they let it grow. Other countries look after it and cultivate it. In the one case they really give attention to it, while in the other they leave it more or less to chance, especially the smaller growers **Foreign Methods.**

Our local rates have increased considerably. The outdoor relief has doubled within the last 12 years. I attribute that to the generosity of the Guardians, and not to any special increase of pauperism. **Local Rates.**

The system of land tenure and compensation for laying out land in fruit has not been satisfactory. It does not encourage the farmers to plant fruit trees that could be grown in our district. **Land Tenure.**

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals might be an advantage to the grower, but they would not be to the consumer. We only want to utilize the foreign crop when our own, from climatic reasons, is not a good one. I would not be in favour of taxing foreign fruits. Any customs duty or tax upon Continental soft fruit would greatly injure the market by causing delay. The getting of the fruit from the ship to the railway and into the markets has to be done very expeditiously, as fruit is so perishable, and any customs duty would greatly harass or interrupt the placing of that fruit on the markets. A moderate tax would not tend to restrict importation of foreign fruit but it might possibly increase the price without keeping the fruit out. If we wanted it through the failure of our own crop at home we should have to pay for it whatever it cost. The importation of German and Dutch soft fruit would probably be stopped; the French probably not, because we get it before our own is ready. The French fruit would find a market here with a tax upon it. This is the only market upon which the foreign fruit grower can put his surplus fruit and he sends it here for whatever it will fetch, and the price he gets is the market price of the day, less any charges which would be put upon it, including the duty. Supposing foreign fruit were taxed to a moderate extent I do not think that would tend to the increase of fruit cultivation in this country. But if it did and thereby gave employment to a large amount of labour then it might be a good policy for the country to adopt. If the fruit which is imported into this country, or a large proportion of it, could be grown here, a great benefit would accrue, not only to the land owner, but to the labourer. The possibilities and prospects of fruit cultivation in this country are very great. If we had 2 or 3 years of good seasons at home, it would practically kill the import of German and Dutch and Belgian fruit. I have known 2 good seasons together, and though that did not deter the Continental merchants from sending fruit, those who did send lost money by so doing. 3 good years would kill importation, but I have never known 3 in succession and I have been in this business all my life. **Duties.**

Effect on Labour.

Expansion.

WITNESS No. 190.

MR. MICHAEL SIMONS

(Simons, Jacobs & Co., Fruit Dealers, Candleriggs, Glasgow).

I am a fruit dealer in London, Glasgow and Liverpool. West Scotland is my head-quarters. I do not cultivate land.

Fruit and vegetable cultivation, especially under glass, has considerably increased during recent years. The expansion of jam-making has increased the cultivation of suitable fruits. In West Scotland tomatoes and grapes are grown under glass. Our industry is chiefly affected by the weather. When the fruit is matured and ready dry genial weather is very beneficial. Results are uncertain because frosts damage the growing crop. Our cultivation of black currants is dying through insect pests, for which we cannot find a remedy, but this fruit grows largely in France. Our market does not suffer from imported supplies. Sometimes we have a good crop and the Continental supply is deficient. Formerly Kent and Middlesex were our chief sources of fruit supply, now it comes chiefly from Gloucestershire, Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire, where suitable land for fruit cultivation has enormously increased in value. Good fruit, well handled, leaves a profit to the grower, but careless cultivators and packers invariably make a loss. In Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire they generally grow inferior apples for cider, but are now cultivating good varieties for the market and handling them in the best way. It is as easy to grow good apples as bad. In Scotland it is unusual to have a crop of apples or pears, but last year I sold Bramley Seedlings, excellent apples, well handled, and grown in Scotland, at £16 a ton. The growers (Campbell & Getting, of Ross, Hereford) have carried off the chief prizes for apples grown in Great Britain. Their trees are all dwarfs. The apples are received, when taken off the trees, into baskets lined with felt, and are handled as if the slightest ill-usage would destroy them. They fetch very high prices because the growers grow, handle, and pack like the Americans. Our fruit produce is chiefly disposed of in the market and through agents. Half is sold to jam-makers, and half for private consumption. The value is much in favour of the latter; the best fruit is not made into jam. Scotch jam is better than any other because pulp is never used when fresh fruit is obtainable. In other parts if a man has not sufficient staff to deal with a large quantity of fresh fruit he pulps and preserves it and makes it into inferior jam later. In Scotland the leading jams are strawberry, black currant and gooseberry. Raspberries are expensive and not very popular for jam in Scotland. **State of Fruit Growing.**

A small conference of some of our leading growers agreed that they are doing well, but that profits have not increased in anything like the ratio of the increased cultivation. **Profits.**

Permanent labour which a farmer might employ is right enough but dearer, and irregular labour is plentiful but dearer and worse in quality than formerly, and we have to go further for it. **Labour.**

Wages have increased during recent years: regular labour 13 %, and intermittent labour 40 %. **Wages.**

977 **Railway Rates.**

Railway rates are excessive and handicap us in favour of the foreigner. From the nearest fruit district to Glasgow—16 to 29 miles—we pay 11s. to 16s. a ton. Foreign fruit, *via* Leith, comes at a through rate: 50 miles in 2-ton lots at 6s. 8d., and without a through rate 8s. 9d., including cartage. It costs 1s. 1d. to bring a barrel of apples from the western portion of New York State to New York, over 430 miles, and from London it costs 3s. 6d. to Glasgow and 1s. 9d. to Liverpool. In the Valley of the Clyde, the biggest fruit land in the West of Scotland, the Caledonian Railway has a monopoly, and the rates are more excessive than those for Leith, which were fixed when the railways had to encounter canal competition. Producers send 10 tons or more at a time but have still to face a differential rate for foreigners. The rate for gooseberries is 8s. 4d. raspberries 10s. 10d., currants 9s. 7d., plums 9s. 7d., apples 6s. 8d., at owners' risk. The Company has no greater risk in carrying one variety than another, yet rates between the same stations vary from 6s. 8d. to 10s. 10d.; this is an anomaly. Legislation is wanted for a re-classification of railway rates for fruit and vegetables. Railway companies ought to see it themselves. In many cases they could derive much more revenue with a modified rate. Transference of stuff between London and Glasgow is more difficult now than before because of railway rates, almost the same as when the want of direct communication with outports rendered London more of a distributing centre. Our railway system is now a combination of the companies for their own interests. Liverpool to London is the same distance as Liverpool to Glasgow, for which the rate is very much less because there is competition by water. Transport rates do not differentiate much between small and large growers. Last season the railways sent an intimation to the trade that in view of the large fruit crop they would greatly reduce the rate, but the reduction only came into force after all the fruit had been marketed. Some years ago a heavy crop of damsons in Kent reduced the value until the carriage to the North cost more than the fruit, so we had it carried by water. The result was the railways abated their rate, but only for that season. Damsons (especially if intended for jam) do not suffer so much as other fruit by delay in transit. Railways generally deliver in good time, but they have combined not to hold themselves responsible if late. Deliveries have greatly improved, and now fruit sent from Gloucestershire at 11 a.m. reaches us next day. Until recently it arrived early the second day. We have also express goods trains from London, which are a great benefit because without them we would have to use mail trains at £5 or £6 a ton. Expresses leave at 2 p.m. and deliver before market-time next morning. The railways generally provide proper fruit vans.

978

Co-operation.

Growers do not co-operate in my neighbourhood, it would be no advantage, they can usually make up full truck loads without combination.

Education.

Much could be done by education to improve care in packing and knowledge of fruit. It would not be difficult to make growers understand the advantages of better packing, &c., and if classes were started with that object, many would learn how to do these things.

Foreign Advantages.

Continental countries have advantages over British growers in climate but not in methods of cultivation of fruit. America has more intelligent cultivation and packing.

979 **Duties.**

Fruit must be considered raw material. A tax on fruit would be unnecessary and a hindrance to business. The English grower with the best fruit will still be able to hold his own in face of imports. A small tax on fresh fruit from the Continent would not diminish the import. To increase the value of home fruits requires a very heavy tax upon foreign. A small duty would be paid by the foreigner but would not benefit the English cultivator; 5% would not bring in the cost of collection. The essence of our trade is rapidity, and to pass the Custom House and pay the duty before the fruit was removed would be impracticable. A package duty would be inequitable but would avoid delay. The Glasgow market has expanded considerably during recent years owing to the great increase of both home-grown and foreign fruit; the large supply at moderate prices has created a very increased demand. With no imported fruit home products would be much increased in value.

Preference.

The proposal to give the Colonies a preference on apples would have no effect. The seasons vary, Colonial apples come here from April to June when there are few or no others, and must be used before the home crop comes in, with which they cannot compete as the freight cost alone of Colonial fruit is generally more than its value. Australian apple growers will derive no benefit from their goods coming in free and foreigners being taxed, because there is no foreign competition at the time the Australians arrive. If Americans had a short crop they would send less to us, and we should suffer. Canadians would then get more for their apples at our cost. In ordinary seasons a tax on apples would benefit the Canadian if his were admitted free. Canadian apples fetch more now than American because we like them better.

980

WITNESS No. 191.**MR. JAMES SWEET**

(Grape Grower, White Lodge, Whetstone, Middlesex).

I have been in business 43 years, first at Leyton, Essex, and in present occupation 20 years.

**State of
Agriculture.**

I have 20 acres of glass devoted to grape and plant growing. After the vines are pruned we flower a crop of plants. Our goods are sent to Covent Garden, and we export to America. The industry has increased very much of late years, but at present has ceased to be profitable on account of low prices through competition of foreign countries and the large increase of vineries. It was a very profitable business 20 or 30 years ago. The industry has developed rather faster than the market. We exported grapes to France some years ago. There was a duty of 2s. per pound, the effect of which was to send all the Belgian produce here instead of to France. It still comes to London, although the French duty has been reduced to 6½d.

The extra labour we require was a difficulty. Advertised for grape thinners, and had many applicants, most probably clerks out of work, who do this light work fairly well when used to it. Ninety per cent. of the unemployed have never learnt any business, and are useless on the land. This is very serious for the country. Youths on the golf grounds are equally useless. Telegraph boys learn nothing, and when older many leave the post office and are nearly useless for other employment—I have tried them.

Labour.

981

The rate of wages has not increased. We have always paid ordinary labourers a guinea. Foreign growers have the advantage of climate and lower taxation, and they pay about 12s. wages.

Wages.

Education is good, but Parliament should compel parents to apprentice their children to a trade. Something might be done in rural education, as in France, where it is compulsory. I remember a National School where 40 years ago they taught all boys over 12 on the land belonging to the school. That was very good. They taught them the use of garden implements, which many in our employ cannot use properly, never having been taught.

Education.

The cost of labour is about £234 per acre per annum. Local rates have become more burdensome of recent years.

Annual Outgoings.

A duty upon grapes might drive part of the foreign supply to other markets, and would tend to develop our home industry. At present prices there would not be an expansion of the industry, but if it increased it would employ unskilled labour otherwise almost useless.

Duties.

982

A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not affect us. Small grapes now come from S. Africa. In the future it is possible they may grow and export other varieties. Grapes of the quality we grow would stand the long journey to this country, and we send them to America now.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 192.

Written Evidence.

MR. EDWIN VINSON

(Fruit Grower, Market Gardener and Farmer, Highcroft Hall, Swanley, Kent).

I cultivate about 1,000 acres now, but when I began in 1860, and for many years afterwards I had 1,800 acres. My business is fruit and market gardening. I grow soft fruits and apples, and all kinds of fruits for jam.

Trade in my district is good and increasing, though I have made but little change in my methods in recent years. We are injured by imports of foreign fruits and vegetables, but imported fruit pulp does us more harm than either. My produce goes to London, Manchester, Bradford, and other large northern towns. Profits have greatly diminished, especially on soft fruits. The causes of such changes as there have been are chiefly over production and consequent fall in price. Our methods of cultivation are as good as those in any European country, but we have less good labour than formerly.

State of Trade.

983

I have no special complaint to make of railway rates. Local rates have gone up at least 50 per cent.

Local Rates.

I expect no advantage, unless wheat growing is made to pay, nor do I think that there would be any advantage to the labourer. Our fruit and market garden industry would increase if foreign supplies were restricted, and probably 3 or 4 times as much labour would be employed. I think if a small landing charge were put on each parcel of fruit at the port, when taken from the ships, it would help the growers. The foreign fruit coming before ours they get the highest prices and can afford to pay extra charges.

Effect of Duties.

I keep a quantity of sheep and bullocks which, when fat, come into competition with the foreign. What I most complain of is that so much of this is sold as English at 10d. per lb., when it is only worth say, 5d. I should like every butcher selling foreign meat to be made to take out a licence and have it written over his shop in large letters "Licensed to deal in Foreign Meat," we should then get 2 classes of butchers, the one who sold English meat could not afford to have it written over his shop, this would protect the public and greatly benefit the farmer. The Government might have to employ a few inspectors to see that the man without the licence did not have foreign meat and, if he had, impose a fine. There would not be much trouble in detecting the foreign. Meat purchased is frequently not what was expected, and it appears to me that this plan of licensing would be no hardship and a benefit to the people.

Licences to sell Foreign Meat

984

WITNESS No. 193.

MR. C. D. WISE

(Fruit Grower, Farmer and Cider Manufacturer, Toddington Estate Office, Winchcombe, Glos.).

Fruit farms, about 1,000 acres, have been under my management since 1885. We cultivate strawberries, gooseberries, currants, raspberries, plums, damsons, apples, cherries, and cob nuts. Under glass we grow grapes, peaches, tomatoes, strawberries, flowers, &c. We also farm some grass land. We send our produce to the principal markets of England, Scotland, and Ireland, we supply Messrs. Beach and most other large jam makers; and we manufacture cider.

985 State of
Agriculture.

The acreage under fruit and vegetable cultivation has increased considerably in recent years. When the fruit tree comes into bearing and the trees overshadow the crops we take up fresh land for the growth of bush fruit and strawberries. From Toddington fruit farms in 1883 the amount of fruit picked was about 45 tons as compared with about 2,000 tons last year. The Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom furnishes the following information:—

	1882.	1896.	1903.
	<i>Acres.</i>	<i>Acres.</i>	<i>Acres.</i>
Land used for fruit trees	187,553	221,254	239,483
Market gardens	48,194	96,696	Not ascertained.
Total	235,747	317,950	

The acreage of orchards has, since 1882, increased by some 52,000 acres, and market gardens have doubled. The acreage of the nursery gardens where trees are raised for market gardener and fruit grower, was in 1895, 13,290 acres; that is an increase in the 10 years up to that date of over 1,000 acres. The figures are not given since 1895. You must select sites to grow fruit profitably. In planting plums, currants, &c., you must leave mist-laden valleys. Our best sites are 300 to 400 feet above the sea level. I attribute the increase in fruit growing to improved distribution which has brought fruit and jam (which a few years ago were luxuries) to all classes.

986 Imported Fruit.

In 1888, 3,796,592 bushels of apples were imported, value £1,030,160; in 1903, 4,569,546 cwt. (say 12,794,729 bushels) of apples were imported, value £2,781,643; showing an increase in quantity between 1888 and 1903 of 8,988,137 bushels, and an increase in value of £1,751,483. In 1888, 412,984 bushels of plums were imported, value £199,854; in 1903, 604,204 cwt. (say, 1,208,408 bushels) of plums were imported, value £643,852, showing an increase in quantity between 1888 and 1903 of 795,424 bushels, and an increase in value of £443,998. Currants, gooseberries, and strawberries to the value of £188,341 were imported in 1903 alone. The great influx of foreign fruit and pulp into this country tends to lower the price of the home grown article, particularly if the home grown crop of fruit is a heavy one. In 1903 we had a heavy crop of plums and were holding them back, making good prices, and sending them in by degrees; we were suddenly knocked down by the cheap German plums known as the "Switchen," which had a very serious effect. The price of the home-grown plum dropped one half. If the foreign crops are short and the home-grown crop is an average one, it means a good season. If there is a heavy crop here and on the Continent there is no profit for the home grower.

Profits.

Labour.

We employ 150 to 250 men, and in the fruit-picking season 300 to 600 women and girls. We make our own baskets, keeping 3 or 4 basket makers employed. We keep an expert for our large apiary, bees being kept to fertilise fruit tree blossoms, as well as for making honey. Fruit farms employ far more labour than agricultural farms. Any surplus labour required we formerly got from the villages round. Now we require more than we can get in that way. Owing to shortness of labour we plant fruit so that we can work the land as far as possible with horses. The supply of good men is short and wages have increased because many young men go to the towns. We have been handicapped the last 3 years by a railway being made through the estate, and the men who left us have been able to earn considerably higher wages than we could afford; but as the fruit industry develops the small holdings will develop, and keep people on the land, and those employed on the small holdings, also their families, &c., will be able to devote some time to outside work. The more people the more labour there is at disposal.

987

Wages.

Wages, £10,000 a year. If the acreage were purely farming (half arable and half grass) it would be only £1,000 a year.

Railway Rates.

Railway companies are finding that fruit growing and market gardening is a very important industry well worth looking after, and forming an important factor in their returns. Owing to the efforts of the National Fruit Growers' Federation and other societies we have got better means of transit, more trains, and special rates for small quantities, particularly by passenger trains. These special rates are quoted by the railways as through rates only on traffic which does not pass on to another company's line. The Great Western has lately opened a line competing with the Midland Railway, and resulting in reduced rates, free cartage, and greater facilities of transit. As business increases and the railway companies carry more of our produce they should still further reduce their charges and improve their classification. The railways formerly paid reasonable claim for loss of market. They charge us a high rate for a perishable article, and if we load our fruit at 4 p.m. on a special goods train due at Manchester at 5 next morning, it ought to arrive at 5 or very soon after, but the railways now entertain no claim for late delivery at owner's risk rates, nor at company's risk rates if the fruit is delivered any time the day after despatch. Fruit growers, therefore, cannot send perishable soft fruit by goods train with any security of delivery. It is doubtful if we have any legal claim against the railway even on fruit sent at company's risk. We use the owner's risk rate because it is lower, but even that is high for a perishable article; compare the respective rates for fruit and minerals. Since 1903 the railways have combined to reject every claim for late delivery. To substantiate any claim we have to prove wilful damage. We have approached the railways and the various associations with a view to moving further in the matter.

988

Market Organisation.

Nearly all large towns contain fruit markets, in which the business has marvellously increased. Manchester market, 50 years ago a small affair in the street, is now a fine covered-in market of 5 to 6 acres. In Leeds only 3 fruit merchants existed in 1854, there are now 20 large and many small dealers, and a market which has been greatly enlarged. The same applies to Birmingham and the large northern towns. Further aid in fruit distribution would be very useful. Many large towns with suburbs find difficulty in getting fruit even in a plentiful season. In south Devon towns at the end of big fruit seasons they have difficulties in getting plums when we are practically giving them away. That is the fault of distribution.

The County Council employs lecturers on agricultural and horticultural education. There should be a sub-department of the Board of Agriculture to watch over the interests of our important and rapidly increasing industry. Experimental farms on up-to-date lines are urgently needed for practical demonstrations of improved methods of cultivation, experiments on growing crops, and dealing with injurious insects. Growers cannot individually carry out such work.

At Toddington increased demand for men has necessitated 30 extra cottages being built.

Four co-operative societies have started within 10 miles of Toddington. At Evesham is an association for selling and purchasing produce. Co-operative methods will greatly assist growers in the purchase of seeds, feeding stuffs, manures, tools, &c.

Foreigners and the Colonies have great assistance from their governments by experimental farms and bounties. The low rates on export goods in countries where railways are under State control are practically a bounty. Canada has a central experimental farm with 4 branches. They issue annual reports, and farmers are gradually adopting scientific methods of protecting crops from injurious insects. Professor Saunders states that 30,000 farmers have associated themselves with the experimental farm. In the United States they have many agricultural stations issuing monthly reports. There are also experimental farms in New Zealand and Cape Colony. In Germany they have school gardens on which a special report has been issued by the Board of Education showing the work in the elementary schools and colleges, where much useful knowledge is imparted to teachers, farmers, and the working classes. Our principal fruit-growing competitor is France, which has low railway rates. French railways, although nominally bound to consider the interest of the stockholders, get very substantial advantages from the State. The principal railways are never called upon to supplement the revenue, consequently they get all their advantages for nothing. By their huge traffic in fruit, and their low rates encouraging larger traffic, they are able to further reduce their rates. Several of the continental railways are State railways, and agricultural and horticultural products are assisted by government grants to get to the coast at low rates.

Holland, Belgium, &c., tax imported fruit, and in Germany a new tariff is proposed on apples, plums, strawberries, raspberries and vegetables. Foreign competition interferes materially with the progress of our industry, and as soon as these new German duties are imposed our market will be inundated by a larger proportion of produce now going to Germany. The Germans propose these duties because they can grow all the fruit they require.

Rates and taxes are increasing and becoming more burdensome. Our glasshouses are assessed for poor rates as buildings, and therefore the benefit of the Agricultural Rates Act does not apply, and practically all the advantage of the Act is absorbed by the increased rates. The rates in two parishes at Toddington in 1894 3s. 2d. and 2s. 3d., have gone up in 1904 to 5s. 5d. and 5s. 3d. respectively.

Rent varies according to whether the land is taken as orchard or agricultural land. Labour on fruit farm costs £8 to £10 per acre. Rent, rates, taxes, labour, manuring and interest on capital amount to £20 to £25. This is exclusive of fruit picking and carriage, which vary with the crop. The spraying machinery with 500 yards of iron main cost £1,000, including horse and hand machines. To plant tree fruit, with bush fruit below, costs £30 to £35 per acre.

The existing duty on imported plum pulp is beneficial. All imported fruit pulp, bottled fruits, vegetables, fruit juices, &c. (which are really manufactured articles) should be taxed. Why should not dried fruit and vegetables now largely imported, form a home industry? If we grew half these importations, the labour in cultivating, gathering, pulping, canning and bottling, expended in this country, would benefit labourers and growers enormously. The extension of fruit growing and development of the canning industry has very great scope and should be encouraged. As population and distribution increase there is no reasonable prospect of overdoing the supply of home-grown fruit unless we are killed by foreign competition. The importation of apples, with cold storage and other advantages, becomes a serious matter to us now we are planting so many. When there is a big season both here and on the Continent we have tremendous work practically for nothing. The proportion the Continent supplies, of fruit, &c., consumed in this country, is very material, but there is room for a large expansion of the home industry, and success for those who grow good stuff, and pack, market, and grade it well. An *ad valorem* minimum duty of 5% would not stop, but might check, foreign fruit importations. Our fruit season is short, and to keep the trade together some foreign fruit is essential, but all countries should be open; import duties should not be levied whilst our markets are open to all. Market gardening and fruit growing are increasing, and would increase more rapidly were growers assured fairly remunerative prices. At present home markets may always be flooded by foreign importations of produce, which ought to and can be produced here, where many acres of land out of cultivation are well adapted for fruit and vegetables; the labourer would reap the advantage, and we should not hear so much the cry of "back to the land," as labourers would remain on the land, and small holdings would extend, keeping not only the labourers of to-day on the land, but the rising generation. Much land out of cultivation could grow fruit. Some waste land between Evesham and Sedgemoor covered with scrub—thorn bushes—apparently undrained, and not worth 2s. 6d. per acre, was drained and let to small holders rent free for the first two years. It was practically out of cultivation. You might have turned ponies on it, or something that you did not mind (figuratively speaking) starving, now it is employing an immense amount of labour, and growing the most profitable crops possible, including some of the best asparagus that comes to Covent Garden market. The land suits it, but the great advantage is the spade labour and individual attention it receives. We want to bring the land back to cultivation, thereby giving more work to the labourer, and larger turnover of capital in the different districts, and obtain remunerative prices for produce without on the whole raising the price of living. The duty paid on exports to foreign countries relieves their taxation, and enables them to finance experimental stations, colleges, &c., at our expense, and so enabling them to flood our markets with their produce.

Education.

989

Cottage
Accommodation.

Co-operation.

Foreign and
Colonial Methods.

990

Foreign Tariffs

Local Rates.

Annual Outgoings.

991

Duties.

992

993

WITNESS No. 194.

Written Evidence.

MR. GEORGE BUNYARD.

(Nurseryman, Maidstone; President of the Nursery and Seed Association of Great Britain and Ireland).

I grow 250 acres of nursery stock, have a seed farm of 100 acres, and have experience in all branches of horticulture for 50 years.

State of Trade.

Trade is very dull, owing to the bad state of agriculture and hop growing. The bulb trade has been killed by auctions of foreign produce, and that in azaleas, roses and plants in general has been crippled in the same way. Profits are less than formerly on a larger turnover. The change dates from about 1880. Prices have fallen, labour has risen, and we are much hampered by increase of local, urban, district, highway and school rates, Employers' Liability Act, &c. The dumping of foreign produce has also seriously affected us. The foreigner has the advantage over us in climate, cheaper labour and longer working hours.

Annual Outgoings.

On a 3 years' average:—Rent, £1,350; labour, £6,000; manure, £400; rates and taxes, £265.

Effect of Duties.

An improvement in agriculture, if it takes place, will have a favourable effect on our trade, and will stimulate it. The condition of the labourers employed in nursery gardening is satisfactory at the present time. I shall not require to make any change in my methods of cultivation or the character of my business.

994

WITNESS No. 195.

Written Evidence.

MESSRS. J. & F. CHATFIELD

(Fruit Growers and Market Gardeners, Southwick, near Brighton, Sussex).

State of Trade.

We are producers of fruit, flowers and vegetables under glass, and the enormous and ever increasing quantities of foreign produce which glut our market render it almost impossible to earn a livelihood. In addition to this competition, the assessment of our glasshouses as buildings is unfairly high. Fuel has risen to nearly double the price of 8 or 10 years ago.

Foreign Competition.

Our best quality hothouse grapes sold at Covent Garden at 6d. per lb. this year, and our salesman informs us that the low price was due to a glut of specially fine foreign grapes offered at 2s. 3d. per 28 lb. Hothouse tomatoes do not pay at an average of 2d. per lb., because thousands of tons enter annually from Spain to sell at 9d. the dozen lb. We cannot compete with the foreigner, because (1) The English climate necessitates growing under glass; the foreigner grows in the open. (2) The English grower pays fair wages; the foreigner employs women at almost nothing. (3) Water transit costs the foreigner barely half the English grower's railway charges. Our lowest railway rates from Worthing and district to London are £1 15s. per ton O.R. on fruit and £2 per ton O.R. on flowers, whereas the foreigner can ship to London for much less.

Duties.

An import duty on competing foreign produce would be a blessing to our industry.

995

WITNESS No. 196.

Written Evidence.

MR. CHAS. E. PEARSON

(Nurseryman, Lowdham, Notts.; Hon. Sec. and Treasurer Horticultural Trades Association of Great Britain and Ireland).

I grow 100 acres of fruit and rose trees and 5 acres of daffodils, besides seeds and bulbs.

State of Trade.

There is no marked change in volume in recent years, but prices are lower, and the bulb trade is less remunerative, owing to the dumping of foreign bulbs by auction sales. The rose trade has also been seriously affected by foreign competition. The lowering of prices has been most marked in the last 15 or 20 years. The margin of profit has become much smaller, and several lines have been given up as quite unprofitable. The dumping of foreign goods is an increasing evil; formerly it was confined to bulbs and flowers, but is now rapidly spreading to roses, fruit trees, ornamental trees, and shrubs; large quantities of these are now sold by auction, often at prices below the cost of production. Better climate and cheaper labour, with longer working hours, enables the foreigner to compete seriously.

Dumping.

Labour and Wages.

There is a decided deterioration in quality, and though the standard rate has not changed lately, foremen and expert hands receive much higher wages, thus increasing the cost of production.

Local Rates.

Have exactly trebled in 4 years; thus—6d. in 1901, 1s. 2d. in 1902, 1s. 6d. in 1905.

Annual Outgoings.

Rent, £335; labour, £2,760; manure, £150; rates and taxes, £81 6s.

Effect of Duties.

There will be increased local production, followed by a general improvement in trade. Employment will be more abundant, and will naturally be followed by a rise in wages.

996

WITNESS No. 197.

Written Evidence.

997

MR. ALFRED AMOS

(Farmer and Hop-grower, Wye, Kent).

I have 70 acres under hops, 300 under grass, 30 arable and osiers.

For the last 3 years hop growing has been all right, but 1899 and 1901 were very bad years owing to the enormous crops grown. On an average the last 7 years have been as good as any other consecutive 7 years. This is a very bad year.

State of Hop Growing.

We were short of labour during the war in South Africa but now we have just enough. I employ home pickers and it costs me more than if I had Londoners. I daresay I could get them picked cheaper by Chinese. I am paying as much for day labour as I ever did and I think the men are as good. I am paying, on an average, 2s. a week more than I did 25 years ago.

Labour and Wages.

The acreage under hops in this district is larger than it was 25 years ago. This I attribute to the fact that the extraordinary tithe of 13s. per acre is abolished and the 6s. per cwt. tax on all hops grown by tenants in the Eastwell estate. This amounted in some years, with a crop of 15 cwt. to £4 10s. an acre over and above the ordinary rent. This tax of 6s. per cwt. was put on by the landlord, Lord Winchilsea, when the duty of 18s. on English hops and 27s. on foreign hops was abolished. He thought this was such a boon to his tenants that he ought to share it. The tax was kept on till 1885.

Causes of Change.

998

Some farmers understand the business better than others through having been sent to good growers to learn. The botanists at the S.E.A. College have solved some problems for the growers and do good work.

Education.

It is difficult to get landowners to build cottages on any terms and tenants cannot get conditions that will ensure them compensation when they leave their farms. If you want to keep good men on the land you must provide them with comfortable cottages and gardens at not more than one day's pay for a week's rent.

Cottage Accommodation.

Now that we have the Education rate to pay, the local rates have risen to about as much as the Agricultural Rates Act gave us.

Local Rates.

My land, if not planted with hops, is rented at 25s. per acre, but 25 acres of the land I have planted in hops is rented at 45s. per acre more, and 25 acres are actually rented at £3 10s. per acre, though I planted them myself. The land is exactly similar. The landlord built me oasts at a cost of £500, and I pay 5 % on the outlay over and above the rent on the hop gardens. I have spent on hopper houses, £400; on planting and getting up 70 acres, £1,400; and on putting up wire work, £2,100; a total of £3,900. For the outlay of £500 my landlord gets 5 % interest, £25; 25 acres rent at £2 5s., £56 5s., a total of £71 5s., or an interest of £14 5s. per cent. I am also bound to leave 25 acres without any compensation for planting, the landlord agreeing to take the wire work by valuation. On the rest of the hops I get no compensation for planting or wire work, so I expect to have to sell the latter at about half what it is worth standing or pull it down and grub the hops.

Capital Invested.

999

I estimate my annual outgoings per acre on my hop farm as follows:—Rent of land, £3 10s.; rent of oasts and hopper houses and buildings, £1 5s.; hop picking and other hand and horse labour, £30; manure, £10; machinery, implements, wire work, &c., to write off and repair, £6; rates, &c., 10s. 6d.; sulphur, wash, coal, &c., £3; fetching pickers by wagons, £1 10s.; carriage to London and commission on 10 cwt. per acre, £4; a total of £59 15s. 6d. I always feel I get nothing for myself till I have reached £60 per acre.

Annual Outgoings.

I would rather there were no duties on foreign hops because the benefits would all be absorbed in higher rents, and in everything used in hop gardens being dearer. Such an impetus would be given to planting that in 3 years hop growers would be suffering from over production and the last stage of the hop grower would be worse than the present. The best prospect the hop growers have is that the acreage is now at 50,000 acres. If a duty were imposed, landlords and labourers would have a good time for a longer period than the tenant, who, if he is a yearly tenant, has only a yearly interest in his holding. If it were possible to put a duty on foreign hops alone no one but the brewer and the consumer of beer would suffer, the brewer till we had over planted ourselves and the consumer in the quality of the beer till hops got cheap again. But as we are not likely to get a duty on hops without a duty on other things, I prefer to remain as at present. The only hop growers who would benefit would be those who already have a large acreage in plant. The Colonies are the spoilt children of the British Empire. There should be absolute free trade between the Mother country and the Colonies, and in return we should let them have the protection of our fleet. The acreage of hops is now as big as it ought to be, for profitable cultivation. I do not wish it to be taken that I think I should not benefit by a duty on foreign hops, as I hold my farm on a lease and the rent could not be raised till it expires, but I object to duties of all kinds, and am not so selfish as to ask for protection for my own and not be prepared to give it to every other industry.

Duties.

Effect on Tenant and Labourer.

Imperial Free Trade.

1000

WITNESS No. 198.

Written Evidence.

MR. JOHN BALDWIN

(Hop-grower and Engineer, Durgates, Wadhurst, Sussex).

I cultivate 26 acres of hops.

I have done fairly well lately with my hop growing, as it has been somewhat more remunerative in recent years. Profits have somewhat increased in favourable districts and where the farming has been good,

State of Hop growing.

1001 Labour and Wages.

General labour has been very difficult to get, and the quality is very poor ; but we have had no difficulty in respect to hop-pickers. Wages have somewhat increased in recent years, and if the quality is taken into consideration wages have largely increased.

Causes of Change.

The causes of decrease in the acreage of hops in this district are : low prices, commencing in 1884-1886, labour difficulties and impecuniosity of growers. Railway rates have scarcely made any difference.

Local Rates

Local rates have very much increased in recent years and are continually increasing.

Capital Invested.

The capital employed by the landlord is very small, and is chiefly for the erection of oasthouses for curing the hops. The tenant's capital is very heavy. I should estimate that a crop of 12 to 15 cwt. per acre would cost £40 or £50 according to season and to the method of cultivation and manuring employed. This would include the whole of the cost, picking, curing and packing the hops ready for market. In a season like the last the cost would be very much increased.

Duties.

I would suggest a duty of 20s. or 30s. per cwt. to be put upon foreign hops as an equivalent to the local taxation upon the home producer. We would thus have a preference in our own market, as the foreigner has in his ; a greater proportion of English hops would thus be grown for the home market, and the increased acreage would lead to a greater demand for labour. If a duty of 30s. per cwt. was placed on foreign hops, the probability of expansion in British hop growing would be very great and we should probably grow the greater part of the hops required for the English market, especially in favourable seasons, as the low price then ruling would prevent the excessive importation of foreign hops. Probably 20 to 25 % additional labour would then be employed.

1002

Preference.

A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not affect us greatly, as our Colonies do not go in largely for hop growing.

WITNESS No. 199.

MR. WALTER W. BERRY

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Gushmere Court, Selling, Kent).

1003

State of Hop Growing.

I farm 840 acres, of which 288 are hops, 120 fruit and the balance arable and pasture.

The hop acreage has somewhat increased in my district. During the last 3 or 4 years we have had small crops which usually mean fair prices with a profit, and hop growing has been prosperous. 2 or 3 years previously we had unprofitable seasons. We grew about twice the quantity of hops that we grew this year, and consequently they were unsaleable at a remunerative price independent of foreign competition. In 1901, when we grew in this country 649,387 cwts. of hops, the average price was 40s. which was below the cost of production. We grew more hops than the brewers wanted, and then they would not buy until they sweated the price down to an unremunerative figure. The last 10 years have been as profitable as the 10 previous years, and I cannot find any accounts of my own or my friends that vary within £1 or £2 an acre.

Labour.

We have no difficulty in getting labour of a kind, but really good men are very scarce. Other industries take the best labour. The labourer is as well off to-day as ever he was. Taking it all round we are paying higher wages now than we have ever paid before.

Railway Rates.

The railway charges in this country are less than they used to be. On the Government Railways on the Continent hops are carried at a much lower rate than they are here. Imported hops are sometimes carried at a cheaper rate in this country than they ought to be, to our detriment. The rate from New York to London via Southampton is £1 a ton, whereas the Petersfield growers pay about £1 a ton from their stations to London. This was the cause of an action at law some years ago, and the railway companies had to alter their charges, but there is still a preference in favour of the foreigner. With regard to the Continent we are not at any great disadvantage, because those hops could come to London equally well by water.

1004

Market Organisation.

There is not much difference in market organisation. There has been rather more combination on the part of the big brewers to purchase their hops in unison, an arrangement which has not been advantageous to the growers, but rather the other way.

Annual Outgoings.

I cannot produce an acre of hops on the system which I adopt under £60 ; rent and interest on money spent in buildings £6 10s. per acre, labour during the year, other than hop picking, £10 per acre ; manure £10 per acre. The sundry expenses, including the purchase of coir yarn and poles, wiring and upkeep of the trellis, hop washes and every incidental required on a farm, work out at £8 per acre. Rates and taxes are about £1 12s. 6d. The cost of picking and curing is regulated very much by the crop. A crop of 12 cwt. per acre will cost £26 to pick, cure, pack and deliver to the London market, and pay the necessary cost of the sale. This makes a total of £62 2s. 6d. per acre. On my farm the total labour for the year was £8,031 7s. 4d. ; feeding stuffs £2,388 6s. 9d. ; general supplies £2,357 12s. 7d., and manure, other than that made at home, £1,594 4s. 8d.

Capital Invested.

The landlord's capital is the value of his land and the interest on money that he has spent. I cover that by £6 10s. rental. I cannot tell you what capital I have got in every acre of my hops. On the last stock-taking valuation in 1903, there were 840 acres. The rent, rates and taxes amounted to £2,231 9s. 10d., the tenant's valuation, January 1st, £19,850, residuary values £600. On my going out of tenancy and

another tenant coming in, I should receive just over £20,000 for the live and dead farming stock and everything, and you have to take a proportion of that as capital invested.

I do not propose that we should have any duty upon imported hops. It has been suggested that the hop acreage would be largely increased if we were protected by a duty on foreign hops of £2 per cwt. That undoubtedly is so; but, having regard to the fact that in 1899 and in 1901 we grew crops which caused a surplus on the market on 50,000 acres, if we again grew such crops on the 70,000 acres we should have under protection, we should be ruining our own industry by our own surplus supplies. Directly you produce, whether at home or abroad, a larger quantity than the brewer requires to carry him round to another crop, he vows he does not want any hops at all until he has sweated you down to a price below the cost of production. If we plant down another 25,000 acres in this country, we shall have every year what we now have about 2 years out of 7, a glutting of the market and low prices, and that from our own action. I fear that if we have a duty on foreign hops we shall be growing during the next 3 or 4 years such a quantity in this country that it will make chronic the state of affairs which existed in those two very memorable and terrible years for us. If we get the Government to put up a barrier which will raise the price of hops against the brewer, he will seek means to combat that position, and there are means within his reach. Large quantities of cheap foreign hops would be, at the first opportunity, brought into this country and warehoused in bond. They would pay no duty, but would be held there as a menace. By the fact that they are in bond 80 % of the money value could be raised at bank rate, and it would cost very little to a few of the biggest brewers in this country to hold half a year's consumption of hops there as an insurance against high prices. It is not done to-day to any great extent because there is free trade in hops—they can get hops from all the world, and on an average of years they get hops at a fair price, and on an average of years we have got a very fair business, and I am very anxious that we should be left in that position. Directly you begin to interfere, we shall find ourselves in a far worse position than we are now. If you absolutely prohibited foreign hops, the position would be very much better. When hops are grown they cannot be used for any other purpose than that of brewing, and they have to come from some place. The foreign hops could always come in on paying £2 duty, and when our price was only £3 a cwt. they would be able to send their surplus, which is no use to them and make some profit from it. In an average of years on 70,000 acres we should grow more hops in this country than the brewers can consume, because we are growing a third more hops per acre to-day than was the custom 20 years ago. We should have spent a large sum of money laying down land to hops; we should be borrowing money right and left; to build the oasts we must spend £250 for every 10 acres of hops, and in 4 or 5 years we should have ruined our own industry, and all be in a far worse position than we are to-day, and we should still have the surplus from the other countries directly we got a slight rise in price. I am not certain that these contingencies will occur, but I have very grave fears. There would be no possible advantage to the labourers from an extension of the cultivation of hops. If 70,000 acres were cultivated, instead of 47,000, the ordinary labourers would not get more pay or very little more. They might, slightly, for the first year or two, but not very much. When prices are high the labourer does not get more for his day's pay than he does when the price is bad. When wheat was £6 a quarter the labourer was not paid more wages than he is paid to-day when it is 30s. There is no golden rule with regard to that. There might be more employment for a short time. We have some difficulty in getting the men we want now. We cannot get a good class of labourers to work on the land because of the various industries which take all the better men. The Navy takes all the young men. We are denuded of those that we should like to keep on the land from other reasons than the question of pay. Supposing there were considerable extension of cultivation we would have great difficulty in getting the necessary labour, and that might mean higher wages for the men and greater losses for ourselves. The labourer might gain for 3 or 4 years, then he would have to seek new pastures, which would, in the long run, do him far more harm than good. The figures Mr. Le May has taken infinite pains to prepare, do not show the real facts of the case. If you take the year 1899 we produced 661,426 cwts. of hops from 51,843 acres, and we imported 180,233 cwts. of hops during that year, but those hops came in during the early months of the year, previous to the picking of this huge crop, and they were to make up the deficiency of the previous year, when we only grew 356,598 cwts. I do not think that the importation of 180,233 cwts. of hops in 1899 had a material influence in fixing the price of English hops at 40s. per cwt., because they were consumed before our crop was grown. Those hops came in between January and June. Our crop of 1899 went into consumption between September 1899 and September 1900. Then after September, 1900, we went up to £5 per cwt. There was no competition from foreign hops at the time we were selling the crop of 1899, until the foreign importations of the following year. These importations amounted to 18,000 cwts. more than in the previous year, but the home crop was then fetching £5, because it was a short crop. That was in September, 1900. In the spring of 1900 when our crop was on the market and we were only getting 40s. we had no foreign hops in competition. It did not pay to send them. If the hops had gone up £1 a cwt., the foreign hops would have come in, but at 40s. they could not come in. We can only make profits in those years when it is necessary to import some hops; because when the brewers in this country know that there are as many English hops grown as are required to go round, the price which they will give us is not remunerative. It is only when there is fear of shortage that we can get a profit. £2 per cwt. on my prices would be a great help if I could ensure it for a permanency. Before foreign hops came in, hop growing was a remunerative employment, but taking one year with another, not more remunerative than it is now. The acreage has gone down from 70,000 acres to 47,000 acres, because we grow certainly $\frac{1}{3}$ more hops per acre now than 25 or 30 years ago.

Provided we have more ground in cultivation there would be a demand for more hops in England, if there were a duty which would tend to keep out the foreigners. And there would be a large amount of money circulated for the first few years, until we got more hops than were wanted.

It would be a serious blow to my business if we had not cheap foreign corn as we have to-day, inasmuch as we have to feed such large quantities to get the manure for our hops, and any rise in price would be directly detrimental to the hop-growing business.

Duties
Deprecated.

1006

Prohibition
Preferred.

Effect on Labour.

1007

Production and
Importation.

1008

Profits.

Expansion.

Effect on
Feeding Stuff.

1009

WITNESS No. 200.

Written Evidence.

MR. JAMES HENRY WAKEMAN BEST

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, The Stocks Estate, Suckley, Worcester).

I farm 542 acres, of which 110 are hops, 90 bush fruit, 40 strawberries, 68 fruit on grass, 221½ arable and grass land, and 12½ woods and waste

State of Hop Growing.

In recent years the acreage of hops in this district has slightly increased, but it has been necessary to invest more capital both in cultivation and the method of drying. In 1901 we had a very heavy crop but it was one of the worst years on record financially, owing to foreign competition. In 1902 there was a small crop with unremunerative prices owing to the heavy crop of the previous year. In 1903 there was another short crop and the prices were again unremunerative, in this case owing to foreign competition. In 1904 we had the shortest crop since 1882, only the highly cultivated and thoroughly washed lands being remunerative. Profits, on the average, have decreased. In the years 1902-4 the crops barely paid the cost of cultivation, and if something is not done to assist the hop growers the industry will, in time, collapse. Though the consumption of beer has enormously increased since 1878 the acreage under hops has decreased from 71,789 to 47,938 acres. As no crop grown in England entails so much labour in its production, it is bad for the country and a great loss to the labourer if the industry is allowed to languish. There is no crop that will bear an import duty better than hops. In the years 1854, 1860, 1867, 1871, 1874, 1881 and 1882 (in this year hops were from £20 to £27 per cwt.), when hops were abnormally dear, the price of beer was not increased, nor would it be increased now if a duty were put on hops.

1010

Labour and Wages.

The quality and supply of labour is quite inadequate to the acreage of hops grown, the labourers having largely migrated to the towns. The consequence is that labour, both for picking and cultivation, has to be imported from the nearest town. The housing of hop pickers and casual labourers has greatly improved. Wages have increased and would be higher still if the prices of the crops were more remunerative.

Causes of Change.

Hop growing has increased in this district, to a certain extent, because corn is grown at a loss. This change began about 15 or 20 years ago.

Market Organisation.

There has been a considerable change with regard to market organisation. Owing to the amalgamation of private breweries into companies and the buying up of the free houses by them, thus creating tied houses, the customers and competition have decreased. In Worcester market few merchants will buy hops on their own account; the majority have become factors. A few growers attempt to sell to brewers direct, but with little success, and many brewers have adopted the system of buying by tender.

Local Rates.

Local rates have very much increased. The Education Rate is becoming more burdensome every year.

Capital Invested.

The capital employed by the landlord in the production of curing of hops, in the building and keeping in repair of kilns and hop pickers' barracks, and the provision of a water supply would amount to from 30s. to £2 per acre. By the tenant, a capital outlay of £80 per acre is required until the first crop is harvested in 2 years from planting. This includes cost of roots, planting, cultivation, manure, erection of wirework, rent, rates, taxes, washing, picking and labour, all for 2 years.

1011

Annual Outlays.

I estimate the annual outlay per acre on my farm as follows:—Rent, £2 10s.; interest on kilns and buildings, £1 10s.; labour at 8 cwt. per acre, on an average crop, £15 to £20; manure, £8; machinery, £6; rates and taxes, 12s.

Duties.

I would suggest a duty of £2 per cwt. on imported hops and the compulsory marking of the district where foreign hops are grown and the date of growth. By this means the hop industry would become more remunerative, a much larger acreage would be put into cultivation and much more labour employed at higher prices. With the exception of Australasia, which is supposed to grow about 20,000 cwts., this year our Colonies produce little or no hops at present. If hop-growing became more remunerative, England, in a fairly favourable season, could produce all the hops required for a year's consumption, and it is probable that double the present amount of labour would be employed.

Effect on Colonies.

WITNESS No. 201.

Written Evidence.

MR. S. BIDE

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Farnham, Surrey).

I farm 663 acres, of which 102 are in hops.

State of Hop Growing.

The growing of hops is declining in this district, many acres having been grubbed in recent years. There has been a considerable loss on the low prices recently realised, particularly so in the past 3 years. On the heavy crop of 1902 there was a loss; on the medium crop of 1903 there was a small profit, and on the short crop of 1904 there was a heavy loss. The hop crop of 1905 has been an exceptionally heavy one, but at the extremely low prices now being paid, many growers will suffer a loss on this season's crop.

Labour and Wages.

Labour is fairly plentiful and any amount of hop pickers can be had. There has been no change in the rate of wages for several years past.

Causes of Change.

The decline in the acreage under hops began 10 years ago and is due to the low prices realised for the crops.

Capital Invested.

The capital invested by the tenant in hop-land varies, according to the crop, from £30 to £40 per acre.

Duties.

I should suggest taxing the foreigner a like amount to what we are charged on our goods. Hops would not then be sent here so freely and more English hops would be grown, thus increasing the demand for labour.

Preference.

A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not require me to make any change in the character of my industry.

1012

MR. CHARLES BRISENDEN

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Wadhurst, Sussex).

The extent of my occupation is 400 acres, of which 32 are hops, 50 arable, 268 grass, and 50 wood, &c. It is in the poorer part of the Sussex hop-growing area, in the hilly part of the county.

The condition of the hop industry is most unsatisfactory. 25 years ago nearly every suitable farm had its plantation of hops, giving employment to a regular staff of men who were good all-round agricultural labourers, but owing to the abnormally high price of hops in 1882 and the general adoption about that time of hop washing and a higher standard of farming, heavy and more regular crops were grown until in 1886 the Government returns give the high total of 776,144 cwt. This did not materially reduce the importation of foreign hops, and surplus stock accumulated, causing ruinous prices. A big reduction in the acreage followed. From 1885 to 1890 there was a reduction of 16,776 acres and in the last 10 years a reduction of a further 11,595 acres. I have a list of 58 farms in my district where hop growing has been discontinued. On these farms there is oast capacity for drying 34,000 bushels a day. On 50 other farms the acreage has been reduced quite one half. The decline of the industry dates from 1886. During the past 10 years we have had most difficult seasons, with extremes of wet and drought, making cultivation expensive, and necessitating a large outlay in washing and sulphuring. Profits have diminished owing to increased cost of cultivation and lower prices. During the 10 years from 1873 to 1882 the price only went below 80s. once—in 1878; during the 10 years from 1883 to 1892, the price was below 80s. in 4 years—1885, 1886, 1887, and 1889; in the 10 years from 1893 to 1902, the price was below 80s. in 7 years—1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899, 1900, and 1901.

The large reduction in the acreage and the number of farms where hop growing has been discontinued has made it easier for the remainder to get pickers and labour generally. I find it easier to get a 60 bins company of home dwellers now than I did to get 20 formerly. The scarcity of lads and young men to take the general and skilled work on farms is making itself felt more acutely each year. The rate of wages has not changed much in recent years though there has been a tendency to increase prices for piecework.

The change is due principally to the low average of prices which have not proved tempting enough for men to run the necessary risks. Another cause is shortness of capital owing to the general depression in farming. There has been a gradual reduction in the acreage for many years. When a farm changes hands (in most cases through the old tenant having lost nearly all his capital in the attempt to grow hops), it is taken by a man from quite another district, notably from Devonshire or Scotland, and these men at once grub the hops and use the farm for dairying or ordinary grazing.

List of farms on which all the hops have been grubbed, with the drying capacity of oasthouses:—

Parish.	Name of Farm.	Capacity of Oasthouse (Bushels per day).	Parish.	Name of Farm.	Capacity of Oasthouse (Bushels per day).
Wadhurst (20 farms 11,700 bushels)	Wickhurst ..	2,000	Burwash—cont.	Brought forward	18,700
	Great Shoesmiths ..	1,000		Climshurst Farm	300
	Great Pell ..	600		Southover Farm	1,200
	Great Butts ..	600		Brownings Farm	300
	Fletchers ..	200		Park Hill Farm	300
	Hobdens ..	200		Grayham Farm ..	100
	Skinner's Farm ..	300		Kingsdown Farm	500
	Snap ..	600		Tott Farm ..	300
	Riseden ..	600		Courtledge Farm	1,200
	Chittenhurst ..	400	Etchingham (2 farms, 2,000 bushels)	Church House	
	Reeds ..	600		Farm ..	1,000
	Wenbans ..	600		New House Farm	1,000
	Scragoak ..	600	Mayfield (4 farms, 3,000 bushels)	Bivelham Farm ..	800
	Watergates ..	300		Bunghurst Farm	900
	Buckhurst ..	600		Claytons Farm ..	900
	Ravensdale ..	300		Park Farm ..	400
	Tapsells ..	600	Heathfield (13 farms, 6,200 bushels)	Holtans Farm ..	700
	Great Durgates ..	600		Tottingworth Farm	
	Three Oaks ..	300		(3 acres now) ..	1,500
	Town Gate ..	700		South Binns ..	400
Ticehurst (7 farms, 4,400 bushels)	Chessons Farm ..	400		Little Broadhurst	300
	Broomden ..	800		Bigknowle ..	600
	Limden ..	800		Little Bigknowle	300
	Cottonden ..	800		Broomham ..	300
	Hammerden ..	600		Street End ..	300
	Maplesden ..	400		Cow Farm ..	300
	Gibbs Reed ..	600		Little Tottings-	
Burwash (12 farms, 6,800 bushels)	Holmshurst Farm	1,000		worth ..	300
	Bines Farm ..	900		Cade Street ..	700
	Witherhurst Farm	400		Green Woods ..	400
	Pottick Farm ..	300		Stonehurst ..	100
	Carried forward	18,700		Total (58 farms)	34,100

State of
Hop Growing.

Labour.

Causes of Change.

Gardens Grubbed.

1014

1015

1016

1017 Gardens
Grubbed
--continued.

Farms went out of hop cultivation from 1886 till about 3 years ago. Hops have been more remunerative during the last 3 years. There has been a little disposition to replant this year owing to the better price, but it is not taking place to any extent. The oasthouses are used in some cases for granaries, which is a great waste of capital.

Education.

The present system of education has a tendency to make the boys disinclined to become farm labourers. Boys are kept most closely at school until they are 13 or 14 years of age and then they think it beneath them to do boys' work on a farm at comparatively low wages. They seem to prefer almost any other occupation, and the result is that there are very few lads being bred up to all round farm work. A short time ago there were only 2 lads employed on 1,000 acres adjoining and including my farm where formerly 8 or 10 were employed.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

The cottage question is a very serious one. As the farm cottages have become vacant owing to fewer men being required on the farms, they have been taken by artisans and others who are able to pay from 4s. to 5s. per week rent, so that it is getting almost impossible for an agricultural labourer to find a house for 2s. or 2s. 6d. a week, which is all he can afford.

Local Rates.

Local rates are 5s. 4d. in the £ against 2s. 8d. years ago. The Agricultural Rates Act is a great help to us. It makes a difference of about £19 a year in my business.

Capital Invested.

The landlord's capital, employed in the production and curing of hops, would be about £50 per acre. If oasts and cottages are included another £50 must be added. The tenant's would be about £45 to £50 per acre.

1018 Annual Outgoings.

The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are: Rent and interest, £2; labour (direct and indirect), £20; manure, £10; machinery, hop poles, wire works, &c., £5; rates and taxes, 5s. 4d. in the £; other outgoings, including sulphur, soft soap, quassia, sundries and coal, £3 15s.; proportion of team labour, £4; total, £45.

Duties.

A duty of £2 per cwt. should be imposed upon all imported foreign hops. The advantage would be most apparent when we grow heavy crops, as no hops would be sent here unless they could make at least 60s. to 70s. per cwt. This would give greater stability to our market and would save the growers from heavy losses in years when large crops are grown at very low prices. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not materially affect us, as our imports from the Colonies are not large. A protective duty of 40s. per cwt. would so encourage the planting of hops that we could easily grow all that are required in this country. The labourer would be benefitted to the extent of nearly £20 per acre spent in wages, directly and indirectly, on every additional acre grown. Supposing we reduced the annual importation by only one half, it would mean growing about 100,000 cwt. more at home on 10,000 acres which, at £20 per acre in wages, would be £200,000 spent in labour. If we captured the whole of the trade, it would double that amount. A great deal of the labour required in the hop industry is done by piecework, and an ordinary farm labourer who is used to a hop farm could easily increase his wages from 18s. to £1. All my best men average £1 a week, taking into consideration the hop measuring, the hop drying, and all the skilled branches of agricultural labour, but of course a duffer would not be able to earn so much. A protective duty would not make much difference in the wages. It would have a tendency to increase them, probably to such an extent as to check the desire to go into the towns. There will be more occupation found for men at slightly increased wages. The wages at present paid to labourers in the hop-growing districts are sufficient to hold them there when there is work. The reason they have gone is because the work went first.

Preference.

Effect on Labour.

1019

WITNESS No. 203.

Written Evidence.

MR. JOHN CHAPMAN

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Boyton Court, East Sutton).

1020 State of Hop
Growing.
Labour and Wages.

I farm 860 acres, of which 90 are in hops, 120 in fruit, 400 arable and 250 grass.

Hops have paid in 1903-4, but in the previous 5 years heavy losses were incurred. The loss on hop cultivation in this district has been ruinous, and the acreage has been reduced more than half.

There has been sufficient labour, but of an inferior class, old men and young ones of indifferent character being the only supply. There has been no scarcity of hop-pickers. Hops cost much more to pick now than formerly, in fact all labour costs 25 % more than 20 years ago.

Causes of Change.

The change in the acreage of hop-growing has been caused by the heavy losses incurred in cultivation and dealing with annual blights, which affected this district more than many others, and the inferior quality of the hops produced through these causes.

Markets

There has been no change in the method of disposing of the hops. This has always been most unsatisfactory from a grower's point of view, the buyers being absolutely masters of the market and dictating their own terms, more especially in years of over production.

Capital Invested.

The landlord invests no money in the cultivation of hops—he has the rent of the land, with such buildings as are necessary. The tenant's capital varies with the seasons and crop and the amount of blight he has to deal with. In my own case it has varied from £20 to £80 per acre.

Duties.

I have no suggestions to make with reference to duties. The brewers have had all the hops grown in this county for many years considerably under cost price, and this year of scarcity is no exception.

WITNESS No. 204.

MR. RICHARD CHILDREN

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Hawden Farm, Tonbridge).

My holding is 200 acres—hops 36, orchards 5, grass 100, arable 53.

The acreage under hops in my district has been reduced by quite one-third since 1886. There is no district that has suffered more from the result of low prices. The value of the land has depreciated considerably. A well-known farm was bought for £22,000 in 1876. Within recent years it was sold to a local landowner for under £12,000. At the present time the actual rent of that farm is under £300. That farm is 3½ miles from Tonbridge and the very best land in the district with oasthouses and hop house accommodation. From 1885 to 1887 inclusive we had heavy losses, owing to low prices. 1888 to 1893 were fairly good years, excepting 1889; 1894 to 1897 were very bad; 1898 good, 1899 bad, 1900 fair, 1901 disastrous, 1902 and 1903 fairly good, in 1904 there was a partial failure of crop and unremunerative prices. In 1901 our hops were sold under £1 per cwt. Such hops would have fetched £6 or £7 this year. The low price of that year was due to the over influx of foreign hops in previous years. We produce our hops in September and put them on the market in October. These foreign hops are put on the market in the previous spring, thereby forestalling us. Profits in proportion to the acreage cultivated have diminished. Several farms in this district that had from 30 to 60 acres of hops in cultivation in 1886 with oast and other accommodation have had the hops grubbed.

State of Hop Growing.

1022

We have had no difficulty as regards hop-picking, but the quality of skilled labour is not nearly so good as 20 years ago. The rate of wages has changed very little since 1886.

Labour.

The change in the acreage of hop-growing began in 1886. We had no difficulties with regard to labour, the railway rates were lower, and the change can only be attributed to low prices caused by heavy foreign competition.

Causes of Change.

There have been little changes with regard to market organisation, but rather more hops are sold direct to brewers.

Market Organisation.

Agricultural education has improved in theory, but is worse practically.

Tithes are practically abolished and rents are 25 % lower. Local rates are steadily increasing.

Local Rates.

For the production and curing of the hops the landlord would require capital for oasts and other buildings of £25 to £40 per acre and for land £30 to £60. The tenant would require capital for poles or wire, £20 to £40, implements £7 to £12, and cash for labour, purchases, &c., £30 per acre.

Capital Invested.

I estimate the annual outgoings per acre of my farm as:—Rent and interest on necessary buildings £3; labour £17 (packing 20s. per cwt.); manure £12; machinery, implements and tackle, including hop poles and wire work, £4; rates and taxes 12s. to 15s.; other outgoings £2.

Annual Outgoings.

A duty of 40s. per cwt. should be put on foreign hops. The duty before 1860 was 40s. If such a duty were put into force there would be more employment at higher wages. Under the more favourable conditions British hop-growing would expand. Every pound of hops required by the brewers could be produced in England at a reasonable price. Probably about 20,000 to 30,000 more acres would be cultivated.

Duties.

1023

WITNESS No. 205.

Written Evidence.

MR. W. ROPER DIXON

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Cambridge, Lynsted, Sittingbourne).

I farm 400 acres, of which 41 are in hops, 103 in fruit, 200 in grass, and 200 arable. Part of the grass land is planted with fruit, and part of the arable land with hops.

For the last 6 years hops have not given me a fair return. This year (1904) they have just paid expenses, in 1902 and 1903 there was a small profit; in 1899 and 1901 there was a great loss; in 1900 a fair profit. In 1899 and 1901 the crops were very heavy and good in quality, but costly to secure, and sold at an average of 48s. per cwt. During recent years profits have diminished owing to foreign competition and brewers not stocking hops. I intend grubbing 13½ acres of hops and planting 6½ more (1905 being a most disastrous year for most hop growers in East Kent). My 41 acres will lose quite £850 as I only picked 12 cwt. per acre, and sold them at 47s. per cwt. I left 11 acres unpicked as the expense of picking would have been more than the hops would have realised. The foreigner dumped his hops here last year and some of our growers made a pool, and these came on the market with the new growth; the brewers' bad trade made matters worse.

State of Hop Growing.

1024

We have no difficulty with regard to the supply of labour in our district, but some hop pickers are imported. The rate of wages has not altered much during the last 30 years but is a trifle higher. This year (1905) labour is cheaper by quite 2s. per week owing to lack of employment.

Labour and Wages.

There is not much change in the acreage of hop growing, but the district is capable of growing many more acres and would do so were it not for foreign competition. Several hundred acres of hops will be grubbed, hence there will be plenty of work.

Causes of Change.

At present railway rates are not too high. If the railway companies would charge the foreigner at the same rate as they do our hops I should not complain.

Railway Rates.

There has been no change in market organisation, but the district markets are not so much used for hops and fruit. Hops go to London; fruit to London and several county towns and a great deal goes north.

Markets.

1025 Means of Carriage.

We have both rail and water for carriage and so should be in a good position, but the railway companies deliver badly and get late for the early markets. It is no uncommon thing to see our trucks of fruit shunted for the foreigner to pass and so be in the market first. Foreign countries have great advantages over British growers. Labour is very much cheaper.

Foreign Advantages.

Local Rates.

Local rates get heavier every year. They now come to 9s. per acre on my land. They are a little lower this year (1905).

Capital Invested.

My landlord employs no capital in the production of hops, except that he finds 2 cottages, consequently I have to provide everything in the way of oasts, wire work, further cottages, &c. One half of my farm is freehold, the other half I hire. Last year my hops cost £50 per acre, in 1902-3 about £53, in 1899, 1900-1 about £55, in 1905 £49 per acre.

Annual Outgoings.

The rent of my farms and interest on buildings come to £564 on the hired land and £520 on the freehold, reckoned at 4 %; labour costs annually, £2,100; manure, £705; machinery, implements, tackle, &c., £600; rates and taxes, £180. This gives per acre: rent, 54s.; labour, 105s.; manure, 35s. 3d.; machinery, &c., 30s.; rates, 9s. Hops and fruit are the costly part of the business.

Duties.

I would suggest a duty of 40s. per cwt. on hops, 10s. per ton on potatoes, 1s. per cwt. on flour, 3s. per qr. on wheat, 2s. per qr. on maize and barley, and 1s. per qr. on oats. If a 40s. duty is put on foreign hops we shall have a greater acreage of hops planted and prices will be more regular. In dear times it will not raise the prices in the least, but it will help the English grower when prices are low and may prevent selling under 40s. per cwt. This would not hurt the brewer very much as prices would be more regular. There would be much more employment for the labourer in hop-growing districts; consequently more money spent, making it better for tradesmen, shopkeepers, &c. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not require me to make any change in the character of our industry. Under favourable conditions British hop growing would expand.

1026

Effect on Labour.

Expansion.

One-third more hops would be grown if we were certain of 1s. per lb. and with the tariffs I have suggested, in 3 years another 20,000 acres would be planted, under these conditions the additional labour employed would cost £500,000.

WITNESS No. 206.

Written Evidence.

MR. H. GARDNER

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Badshot Farm, Farnham).

1027

I farm 220 acres of which 30 acres are in hops.

State of Hop Growing.

During recent years the cultivation of hops has been a losing game, and a large percentage of hops in my district have been grubbed and the kilns converted into warehouses, houses, &c. Personally I have done fairly well, taking the last 3 years into consideration.

Labour and Wages.

Labour is fairly plentiful, but the quality is not so good. Hop pickers are more plentiful every year. The rate of wages has not changed except for carters, cowmen and shepherds who have to work on Sundays. This work is becoming very unpopular.

Cause of Change.

The change in the acreage of hop growing commenced about 10 or 12 years ago and was caused by the low prices of hops.

Local Rates.

Local rates are increasing and now amount to nearly as much, annually, as before the Agricultural Rates Act came into force.

Duties.

I would suggest that we charge a duty on foreign hops the same as is charged on all our goods by other countries. Hops would not then be imported so freely, especially when prices are low, there would be an increased acreage under hops, so that there would be more work and better pay.

1028

WITNESS No. 207.

Written Evidence.

MR. E. C. HILDEN

(Hop-grower, Tenterden, Kent).

I cultivate 8 acres of hops and 16 acres of mixed corn and roots.

State of Hop Growing.

Hop growing has been much reduced in acreage during recent years owing to bad prices and unremunerative crops. Profits have disappeared.

Labour and Wages.

I have had no difficulty with regard to the quality and supply of labour, but the wages have increased in recent years.

The capital employed by the tenant would be £25 per acre in a general way.

Duties.

I would advocate a duty of 40s. per cwt. on imported hops. This would result in increased employment owing to increased cultivation. Probably the amount of labour employed would be nearly double what it is at present.

WITNESS No. 208.

COLONEL JAMES F. HONEYBALL

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Teynham, Kent).

My occupation is 349 acres, of which 94 are hops in full plant, 14 young hops, and 112 fruit.

The years 1899 and 1901 were very unremunerative. In 1899, 16 cwt. per acre, sold at 49s., equal to about £40 per acre. In 1901 I picked 825 pockets, on 81 acres, and left about 90. The top price was 56s., and the lowest 25s., giving a return of £35 per acre. 1902 was a good year, 89 acres yielding £87 7s. 6d. per acre. There has been nothing exceptional in my case. There have been the usual wide fluctuations in prices, and some districts have been more favoured by rainfall in the dry years than others, but on the whole hop-growing in East Kent has not been less remunerative in recent years. Other hop-growing districts have fallen off in their acreage, but East Kent has not. The soil is very fertile, and with better management larger crops have been grown, which have compensated for the lower prices which have ruled.

There has been no great difficulty in regard to the quality and supply of labour. We can obtain all the pickers required from the towns. The tendency of the rate of wages of labourers has been to advance. Binmen's and pole-pullers' wages a few years ago were 21s. per week, and we now pay 24s. We also pay 17s. a week for ordinary labourers where we used to pay 15s., and the piecework pay for the various operations in the hop garden has increased recently. My district is close to large brickfields and cement works, which tends to make labour scarcer, and it is necessary to pay more money to retain your people.

The acreage under hops has increased of late years in the Teynham district, owing to the fact that it is good land and better cultivated. In years gone by, although the soil itself was very suitable for hop growing, in consequence of it being a low-lying country we were very subject to insect and fungoid pests, and we then had not the means of combating them. Since 1882 the spraying or washing of hops has become universal, and also the sulphuring to destroy the mould. Those two remedies have enabled us to grow hops in the low district between Chatham and Faversham, which, when I was a boy, was considered to be quite unsuitable, so that there is a considerable increase in the acreage of hops in that district.

The South Eastern Agricultural College at Wye has rendered great service to hop growers. The results of carefully-conducted experiments have been communicated to planters at largely-attended annual conferences and by printed reports.

We have little or nothing to learn from foreign countries in respect to methods of cultivation. There are some small localities on the Pacific Coast of North America where the virgin soil enables heavy crops to be grown at comparatively small outlay, but I understand these localities are limited.

In the last 7 years local rates have increased 65 to 70 %.

The capital employed varies considerably, but you may average it as landlord's £100 to £120, and tenant's £55 to £75 per acre. In special cases, however, the tenant finds all capital except the value of the land.

The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are: Rent and interest, £6 10s., labour £21, manure £10 4s., machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts, poles and wire work, renewals £10 12s., rates and taxes 10s., horse labour £3 10s., indirect labour, tradesmen's bills and other outgoings £3 3s., making a total, including carriage of hop-pickers to and from work, of £55 9s.

I consider a duty of 40s. per cwt. on hops in conjunction with general fiscal reform (not apart from it) would be a very great advantage to the country. In the case of the Colonies a small duty say of 10s. per cwt. might be imposed, and such duties might, in a year of great scarcity, be suspended. I anticipate great advantage to the community from the adoption of general fiscal reform. The increased prosperity it should bring would be fully shared by hop planters, who are greatly affected by depression in the manufacturing centres. I do not look for permanently higher prices as a direct result of the imposition of a 40s. duty, because the larger production at home would modify that. The labourer would get his fair share of any general increase in the rate of wages. It may not be possible to grow all the wheat we require at home, but no one can dispute the possibility of growing all the hops we want, and the advantage to the nation is patent. No product of our soil employs so many persons per acre and at such good wages as do hops. The profitable cultivation not only retains the rural population but draws out the urban dwellers for a healthful holiday to their great physical advantage. On my basis of £21 an acre in wages last year, the replanting of 24,000 acres would mean half a million sterling in wages, nearly the whole of which sum would be paid to the working classes. Besides this, the coal getters, factory hands, makers of soap, pocketing cloth, hair cloth, screening wire, &c., &c., and the village tradesmen would gain employment. One hundred acres of hops will cost from £5,000 to £6,000 to cultivate and produce; and 100 acres of pasture land would want a very small outlay—£100 or £150. One man will look after the sheep on 100 acres of grass, whereas it takes 40 men at least to look after the hops on 100 acres. £5,000 spent in the country against £150 must surely be a benefit to the nation at large. It is in no selfish spirit that we all look at this fiscal question. We shall all reap benefit if we can get fiscal reform. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my industry.

State of Hop Growing.

Labour.

Causes of Change.

Education.

Foreign Competition.

Local Rates.

Capital Invested.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

Effect on Labour.

Preference.

1030

1031

1032

WITNESS No. 209.

MR. W. W. HUBBLE

(Hop-grower and Farmer, The Elms, Hunton, near Maidstone; and in the parishes of Yalding and Marden).

My occupation is about 800 acres, of which hops form about 220 acres.

During recent years hop cultivation generally has become more expensive. There have been frequent heavy attacks of aphid blight, and growers have been put to considerable expense to combat these. The

State of Hop Growing.

1033 State of Hop Growing
—continued.

average price for the 10 years ending 1903 having been 30 % less than that of the previous 10 years, it follows that growers have not had a happy time. Taking the average crop and price for the 10 years ending 1903 and comparing them with the previous 10 years, there has been a yearly loss of nearly £5 per acre on the English plantation. My district has not suffered so much as some others where the land is less suitable and where hops have gone out of cultivation to a large extent.

Labour.

There has not been much difficulty with regard to the supply of labourers but the quality has deteriorated. The young men leave farm work for the towns, and men who have been born on the land and brought up to the work are becoming scarce. More dependence has to be placed on casual labour of which there has been an increased supply during the last 3-4 years. We generally get a sufficient number of hop pickers, $\frac{1}{10}$ ths being immigrants from London and neighbouring towns.

Wages.

Wages have fluctuated somewhat according to the state of the industry. Bad years have occasionally been followed by reduced wages, and corresponding advances have followed good years. At present the cost of labour is as high as I have ever known it in my experience. We spend more per acre than we used to.

Causes of Change.

In my district the acreage under hops has not changed materially, but speaking generally the acreage has been largely reduced through over production, supplemented by large imports when prices have been much below the cost of home production. The decrease in the acreage commenced after 1885-1886, when we had two heavy crops on an acreage of 70,000, supplemented by large imports, and prices at a very low level. The decrease has been steady until now only 48,000 acres are under hops.

1034

Education.

We have great facilities for technical education at such institutions as Wye College. In our village schools the boys do not get a suitable training for agricultural work and the regulations as to attendance are unfavourable.

Local Rates.

Local rates and taxes are gradually increasing. If it were not for the relief under the Agricultural Rates Act they would be extremely burdensome.

Capital Invested.

The capital invested per acre in good hop land by the landlord is, for buildings £75, and for land £40, a total of £115; by the tenant, for working capital £55, for dead farming stock and implements £25, a total of £80. In many instances the necessary buildings are provided by the tenant.

Annual Outgoings.

My annual outgoings per acre are: Rent on land £4, interest on necessary buildings £3, labour (including picking and drying a moderate crop) £25, manure £10, machinery, &c. £8, rates and taxes 20s., other outgoings £8.

Duties.

I suggest an import duty of 40s. per cwt., which would tend to stop imports in years when prices in our markets are much below cost of home production.

Preference.

A preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my industry.

1035 Expansion.

With an import duty of 40s. the hop acreage might be increased to the extent of 15,000 acres or more. That would likely replace the foreign hops. With our improved methods of cultivation, and the expense that we go to to combat the various blights, with an increase of 15,000 acres we could very likely grow enough hops to supply the consumption. There would be ample land suitable for hop planting and hop growing. The additional amount of wages paid for the labour which would be employed under these conditions would be £300,000 to £400,000 per annum. With a full crop perhaps £500,000.

WITNESS No. 210.

MR. CHARLES LAKE

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Oakleigh, Higham, Kent).

I farm 800 acres—225 acres of ploughed land and 550 acres of marsh and meadow land. Only 25 acres are now in hops. Up to 3 years ago I had 70 or 80 acres. I reduced the acreage because it was not profitable.

1036 State of Hop Growing.

During the last 3 years, including 1904, hop growing has been fairly profitable where we have been able to secure an average crop, prices being much higher. Unfortunately, in my district, a great many farmers grew practically none at all, or only about 1 cwt. an acre. From 1894 to 1901 prices were nearly every year so low that we had very heavy losses. The only year we made a profit was 1898. The quality was good, but although we grew 14, 15, 16 and 17 cwts. per acre the prices were so low owing to large foreign importations—40s. in 5 or 6 of these years—that there was a loss of between £20 and £30 an acre. When the hops are as low as 40s. there must be a loss—you cannot help it. There have been no profits on the average of the last 14 years, and in two instances farmers have been obliged to give up their hop farms owing to their heavy losses. The hop acreage has not materially altered during that time. It is being maintained at its present level because one or two farmers and land owners are anxious to put down fruit, and the best way of establishing an orchard is to establish it in a hop garden. They put the land down with hops for 2 or 3 years, then put in the fruit trees and gradually grub the hops. That is going on in face of the foreign competition which fruit growers have to face. As a farmer has grubbed 30 or 40 acres because the fruit trees have been established he has put in some more to take their place, probably because he wants to put in another orchard.

Labour.

There is not much difference in the supply or quality of the labourers in recent years, and there have not been many changes. The rate of wages is slightly higher, and owing to the boys being kept at school until they are 14 or 15 we do not get a chance with them. They are over-educated, and then they go into the towns and will not come back and work for us. We are situated rather near 2 or 3 populous towns.

From the statistics we must do infinitely better than other countries. We grow so very much more per acre than they do, so our plans and methods must be ahead. Generally speaking, our quality is very much better.

I put the landlord's capital in hop land at £120 per acre (land £70, cottages £25, oasthouses £25), and the tenant's capital at £110 an acre (£60 for cost of growing an acre of hops every year and £50 for the original outlay in poles or wire work, and the heavy manuring and subsoiling, the sticks for the young hops which are useless afterwards and the loss of one entire year's crop on the whole of the land).

I estimate the annual outgoings per acre on my farm at £3 for rent and interest on necessary buildings, £25 for labour, £8 for manure, £7 for machinery, implements, &c., poles and wire work, £1 for rates and taxes, and £20 for other outgoings, including horses, hop washing, sulphur, string, coals, carting, commissions, railway charges, storage, insurance, interest on capital, &c. This makes a total of £64 per acre.

A duty on hops would be an encouragement to those who have recently grubbed, or are about to grub, to continue the cultivation. The only reason why hops are not much more cultivated than they are, is because of those disastrous 40s. years. I suggest a duty of at least 40s. per cwt. on all imported hops, which should be a great boon to all English growers, as under such a condition the price of hops would not fall to the 40s. level which it has so often reached in recent years, and which is a loss to growers of over £30 per acre. Even in these 40s. years as many foreign hops are dumped down in England as in the high-priced years, and it is undoubtedly these foreign hops that have made the prices in these years (1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1899 and 1901) so ruinously low, and which has cost English hop growers such heavy losses. With a duty of 40s., the price of hops would not be below £4 per cwt. Taking an average crop we should just make a profit. In that case other branches of farming being so bad, as well as hops, there is no doubt a great many more acres would be put in. I go so far as to say that we should go back to the acreage of 1886, and grow 70,127 acres. That would mean an increase of 23,000 acres and £575,000 per annum more money paid in wages. It is only fair to presume that £100,000 per annum of that would go back into beer, and therefore there would be many more hops required on that showing alone. The local tradesman also would be largely benefited by the cost of materials and repairs.

WITNESS No. 211.

MR. EDWARD LE MAY

(Hop-grower, Denmark House, Tonbridge; Secretary of the Conference of Delegates appointed by the Canterbury, Farnham, Hereford and Worcester, Maidstone, Rochester, Rye, and Tunbridge Wells Farmers' Clubs to watch the interests of the hop-growing industry in connection with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals).

I am prepared, speaking for the Conference as well as myself, to give evidence on the position of the hop industry.

The average of the Government estimated production for the 21 years 1883 to 1903 was 8 cwts. 0 qrs. 18 lbs. per acre. The average importation for the same period into England was 189,116 cwts. The acreage in 1878 (the high-water mark of the growth of hops in England) was 71,789 acres. Since that date it has been slowly reduced, with slight variations, until in 1904 the acreage in England was 47,938 acres, shewing 23,851 acres grubbed, which if replanted, at the estimated product of 8 cwt. per acre, would produce 190,808 cwts. of hops. Were this done, with the average crop, we could produce practically the whole of the hops that are required for brewing purposes in England. We have the oast houses and buildings necessary for curing and preparing these hops for market, which is a very serious matter. To cultivate 23,851 acres of hops 8,000 men and their families would be required, and in addition 129,000 men, women and children for about 3 weeks at picking time. This would be a great relief to many of our over-burdened towns, and the fact that some 129,000 more men, women and children would leave our great towns for 3-4 weeks' holiday, would be a great boon to our over-populated urban districts. The estimated average cost of cultivating an acre of hops is £53. At that price the money circulated by cultivating hops is more than by any other individual article cultivated in England. The 23,851 acres, if replanted, would, therefore, circulate per annum, £1,264,103, with the consequent improvement of all trades in the districts. £20 to £30 per acre is spent upon actual labour, so that, if we replanted these 23,851 acres we should be expending between £600,000 and £700,000 a year upon labour. We are anxious to replant this acreage, but our feeling is that the unfair competition from abroad is gradually and surely destroying the hop-growing industry in England. The United States, which is our most serious competitor, and the Continent, are free to send here any surplus. Their acreage is now considerably in excess of that required to grow sufficient for their home consumption. With anything like an average crop they have a large surplus, which they dump here without regard to the prices ruling. Having their own market secured to them by their protective tariff it is of little consequence to them if they so swamp this market as to reduce the price below the cost of production, well knowing the advantages that are likely to accrue to them through their further distressing the English producer. When our own crop is small, by sending us their surplus, they keep our price too low to be remunerative. Even our best lands will have to give way to the foreigner. The American farmer is gradually increasing his acreage. We have a short crop this year, the Americans have a full crop and are sending their hops here, reaping a magnificent profit to themselves. At the same time they have reduced the price of our home produce to such a level that we cannot live. The result is that this year, which should have been profitable to us as a whole, if you work out the average price of an average production, is a distinct loss.

The average quantity of hops introduced into England in the last 20 years has been 189,000 cwts. Of that quantity during the last 5-6 years, we had received from America about 110,000 cwts. per annum. To prove how the foreigners have dumped their hops here, without regard to the question of the price, and to shew that it is not necessary we should have these hops here, when we have grown practically all that is sufficient for our home consumption, I have a few figures:—

Foreign Conditions. 1037

Capital Invested.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

1038

Effect on Labour.

1039

State of Hop Growing.

Labour.

Foreign Competition.

1040

Imports.

1041 Imports
—continued.

Date.	Imports. Cwts.	Estimated Home Production. Cwts.	Price. s.	Acreage.
1883	129,600	560,000	130	68,016
1884	256,777	420,000	115	69,259
1885	266,952	509,170	63	71,327
1886	158,759	776,144	40	70,127
1887	145,122	457,515	65	63,709
1888	216,606	281,291	145	58,494
1889	200,690	497,811	56	57,724
1890	188,028	283,629	200	54,551
1891	195,264	436,716	112	56,148
1892	187,507	413,259	126	56,259
1893	204,392	414,929	126	57,564
1894	189,155	636,846	40	59,535
1895	217,161	553,396	41	58,940
1896	207,041	453,188	50	54,217
1897	164,154	411,086	60	50,863
1898	244,136	356,598	130	49,735
1899	180,233	661,426	40	51,843
1900	198,494	347,894	100	51,308
1901	116,042	649,387	40	51,127
1902	191,324	311,041	112	48,031
1903	113,998	421,069	112	47,938
Total for 21 yrs. 1883-1903	3,971,435	9,852,395		1,206,715
Average	189,116	469,161		57,462

Average per acre: 8 cwt. 0 qrs. 18 lbs.

ACREAGE.

Continent	175,800
America	55,300
England	47,800
World	280,000

1043

Quality.

Railway Rates.

Foreign Hops.

1044

Duties.

Effect on Brewing.

In 1885, when English hops were fetching 63s. we imported 266,952 cwts. As a matter of fact the price proved that we did not require a single cwt. They simply depressed our market, and remained with us for many years still further depressing it. In 1899 we grew a 1/3rd more hops in England than were required by our brewers. It was a phenomenal year, and we were selling our hops at an average price of 40s. which was a distinct loss of half to the grower, and we then imported 180,233 cwts. The whole of those 180,233 cwts. were not required by our English brewers. The quality of hops varies from year to year. This year the American hops on our market would be worth on an average £1 less per cwt. than English hops. The Belgian hops would be worth on an average about £2 less. There are one or two small districts in Germany where the prices would be quite equal to the English prices—the Spalt district, and the Hallderdau district, where the crops are very good quality and would rank equal with the best hops grown in other parts of the world—but outside those districts the average price of the German hops on the English market would be about £1 less than the English hops. Carriage does not seriously affect the question. We are paying a larger proportionate rate than our competitors, but the difference is so small on such a high-priced article as hops that it is of no consequence. We pay £1 a ton from Kent. It may be the Germans pay 40s. The question of 1s. a cwt. is nothing.

The nature of foreign hops is entirely different from English hops. The American hops are very much rougher in flavour. Foreign hops are not necessary to our brewers. In the manufacture of a small quantity of beer—Lager beer—it might be advantageous to the brewer to have a few German hops, because it gives that particular flavour to the Lager beer, but in the brewing of the ordinary beer there is no necessity for foreign hops. It could be easily proved that quite one-half, or two-thirds, of the English brewers do not use any foreign hops. Brewers use foreign hops because they are cheaper, but the fact that a very large number of brewers do not use them proves that they can brew beer without them. The brewers who do not use foreign hops may be mostly small, but if they can use them, then the largest can do so.

I consider 40s. a cwt. a fair duty upon hops. Originally we had this sum, and although it may be a very large percentage, it is not very large with respect to hops. In the years when hops fetch high prices, like this year, 40s. would not deter the foreigner—it would still leave a fair margin for his profit. On the other hand, 40s. would just prevent the foreigner sending his hops here in those years when we have a large home growth. That has in some years reduced our price a long way below the cost.

The attack of the foreign hops upon our English growing is insidious. The brewer, by the manufacture of beer with foreign hops, slightly alters the taste of the beer. There is a different flavour, and as the brewer uses more he must continue to do so. He cannot use all foreign hops one year and all English hops the next, without considerably interfering with his trade. We argue that if this duty were placed upon foreign hops, in the course of 4 or 5 years the brewer would wean his customers away from that particular flavour, and would come upon English hops again, and that the foreigner would grub something like 35,000 acres of hops, while we should probably replant 20,000. Foreign hops are not altogether necessary to brewers but East Kent hops are, to a certain extent, whatever the price is. But when they have educated the public to the rougher class, and the rougher flavour of the ale, the East Kents would not be necessary.

WITNESS No. 212.

Written Evidence.

1045

MR. EDWARD LORD, JUN.

(Farmer and Hop-grower, Langdon, Ruckinge, Kent).

I farm about 250 acres, and manage about 250 more for my father. On my holding there are about 100 acres arable, 5 hops, and the remainder pasture. Three out of the 5 acres of hops are planted with cherries between the hops. My father's holding is about 50 acres arable, and the remainder pasture.

My hops are grown in Romney Marsh and, with the exception of about 5 acres belonging to another grower, they are the only hops there. There used to be a lot of hops on the hill sides adjoining Romney Marsh, but the greater part have been grubbed within the past 20 years. In good hop years I have generally grown a good crop, and when there has been a short crop, both here and abroad, they have generally left a fair profit, owing to the much higher price of the hops and less cost for picking.

Hop growing has been more remunerative in recent years, owing to higher prices. The following is my average crop per acre and price per cwt. for the past 11 years:—

1894	..	..	5½	cwts. at	£2 16 0	1900	..	..	3½	cwts. at	£4 0 0
1895	..	..	10	" "	2 2 0	1901	..	..	10½	" "	2 2 0
1896	..	..	2½	" "	1 15 0	1902	..	..	4	" "	6 0 0
1897	..	..	6	" "	4 0 0	1903	..	..	4½	" "	5 4 0
1898	..	..	6	" "	6 0 0	1904	..	..	3½	" "	8 15 0
1899	..	..	17	" "	2 0 0						

We have had no difficulty with regard to labour. There are plenty of home people ready and willing to do the picking at a fairly reasonable price. Had we anything like the acreage of hops there was 20 years ago we should have to pay a much higher price for labour, as the population in the district has very seriously diminished. Not only have hops been grubbed, but much arable land has gone out of cultivation by being sown down to pasture, so that, even with the greatly reduced population, if it were not for the woods and woodwork and an occasional day's beating, many of the men would be out of employment.

The ordinary agricultural wage in the '70's was 2s. 9d. per day; now it is 2s. 6d. In those days they could get regular employment at that wage, besides ample piece work, at which it was no unusual thing for them to earn 3s. to 5s. per day. Now they think themselves lucky if they get constant employment at 2s. 6d. ordinary work or 3s. or 3s. 6d. piece work.

The change in the acreage of hop growing began about 20 years ago, and was due not so much to labour difficulties as to foreign competition, which began to be severely felt at that time. The railway rates abroad, and especially the shipping rates, seemed at that time to encourage the foreigner to our cost, while the home railways granted no concessions or very little, so that foreign hops could be brought here and put on our markets in keen competition with our own hops.

We should very much like to see a better system of agricultural education, that of the present day being useless. The present agricultural labourer has not one-half the intelligence of his predecessors. All he thinks about is how he can "best" his master. He does as little work as possible, and does that badly. Unless the system of education is improved there will soon be few men worth keeping. What is required is more practical knowledge and less theoretical nonsense.

The local rates are very burdensome, and have considerably increased. It is time the land that produces the food of the people should be free from duty. It really means a tax on the food produced in England, while the foreigner goes free.

The landlord's contribution to the capital employed in the production of hops is simply the land; the tenant has to invest from £20 to £30 per acre, and in some cases more.

The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are as follows: On hops,—Rent and interest on necessary buildings, £1; labour, £10 to £15; manure, £4; machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts, including hop poles and wire work, £4 15s. or £5; rates and taxes, 5s. My hops cost me about £20 an acre, though this year I have spent more, say £25. On my arable land I spend about £10 an acre; on my pasture land, rent, rates, &c., pretty well cover the whole thing, the labour being very little.

I should charge on imported hops the same duty they charge us. The advantages we should gain would be free access to their markets, or, if not free, access on the same terms as they get access to ours. We should get better prices. The more profit the grower made, the more he would spend on labour, and the larger would be the acreage under cultivation. If I felt any security in an arrangement between this country and the Colonies against the unfair trading of the foreigner I should certainly be inclined to plant more hops, plough up more land, and spend more on labour. Under these conditions hop growing would expand to quite double its present dimensions, and the demand for labour would increase proportionately.

State of Hop Growing.

Profits.

Labour.

Wages.

Cause of Change. Railway Rates.

Education.

Local Rates.

Capital Invested.

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

1046

1047

1048

WITNESS No. 213.

MR. JOHN D. MAXTED

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Lower Garrington, Littlebourne, Kent).

My holding is 696 acres, including 60 acres of hops, 115 acres of corn, 83 acres of green crops, 417 acres of grass and 32 of fruit.

1049 State of Hop Growing.

I have taken out the averages for the last 7 years showing the alteration in the crop. I have 3 sets of 7 years' averages, which fairly represent a good many other similar accounts in our district. In the first 7 years from 1883 to 1889 inclusive, the average crop was 10 cwt. per acre, and the average price was £6 3s. 1d. In the next 7 years from 1890 to 1896 inclusive, the average crop rose to 10½ cwt. per acre, and the average price £6 14s. 6d.; in the last 7 years 1897 to 1903, the average crop rose to 11½ cwt. per acre, but the average price fell to £5 10s. Although the average crop per acre the last 7 years has been 1 cwt. more than the previous 7 years, the average price per cwt. has been £1 4s. 6d. less. The cost of growing hops has increased in the same time by £3 10s. per acre. That extra cost is in washing, sulphuring and labour.

Labour.

There has been a better supply of labour since the end of the Boer War. The rate of wages of labourers has changed very little in recent years.

Causes of Change.

The cause of the decrease in the acreage under cultivation is the free import of foreign hops. This change began in 1896 when we grew a very heavy crop, and owing to foreign importation, our prices were much below the cost of production.

Foreign Methods.

Some neighbours of mine went to Germany and Bavaria in 1903 and 1904. It was then clearly seen that the growers in these countries were very much behind us both in the cultivation and the curing. They grow far less per acre than we do; they spend less on it, and the growers themselves only partially cure the hops, and then they are sold to merchants who finish them off and grade them.

1050 Local Rates.

Local rates are continually increasing owing latterly to the Education Rate. But all local rates seem to go up.

Capital Invested.

I estimate the capital employed in the production and curing of hops on the part of the landlord as £60 per acre—£25 on oasts and £35 on cottages and other buildings. The tenant's capital I estimate at £70 per acre—£25 on poles, wire and implements, and £45 cost of growing. In this estimate I have left the land out. The total cost would thus be about £130 an acre plus the land.

Duties.

I would suggest that we should have an import duty of 40s. per cwt. on hops. That would enable all the hops required to be grown at home. There is plenty of land in this country to grow as many hops as we want, and if it were sufficiently remunerative it is pretty certain that they would be grown. The labourer would benefit as there would be more men required for cultivation, more women for training and picking, and more children for picking.

Effect on Labour.

Preference.

A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not make any change in the character of my industry.

Expansion.

Under favourable conditions the present acreage could be increased by one half, and the probable additional amount of labour which would be employed would be £20 per acre on 25,000 acres, equal to £500,000 per annum, besides extra work for tradesmen and all others interested in the hop industry.

1051 The Use of Sulphur.

I do not think that the growing tendency of sulphuring hops has been detrimental to their quality and has, therefore, let in the foreigner in some way. They have been quite as attractive to the brewers as before. The sulphur used has been purchased under a guarantee that it is entirely free from arsenic, and I have never heard of any bad effects from the use of it in my own case.

WITNESS No. 214.

MR. ARTHUR MISKIN

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Ladds Court, Chart Sutton, Maidstone, Kent).

I farm about 435 acres, of which 95 are hops, 85 fruit, and 255 arable and pasture land. I have been in the parish 24 years.

State of Hop Growing.

Hop growing has decreased in our district very considerably of late years, and has been from 10 % to 20 % less remunerative. In this parish 8 farms which grew hops 25 years ago have ceased to grow them. The oast houses mostly remain, though in some cases, with slight alterations, they are used as stores, &c.

1052 Labour.

We have no difficulty about labour. We employ mostly London labourers for picking, and usually get double the number of applicants we require for this work. More especially has this been so in the last 2 or 3 years. In the picking we employ a great many children. The pickers bring down the whole family. Sometimes you will see youngsters of only 3 or 4 years of age picking a few hops, but you could scarcely call them at work.

Wages.

Man, wife, and 2 children between 10 and 14, would earn 7s. to 8s. a day. We give lodgings, but no food. We do not provide bedsteads, but plenty of clean wheat straw, and firing. The rate of wages has not changed permanently. Once or twice during my time the wages of the regular hands have been reduced 10 to 20 % during the winter months.

Cause of Change.

The change in the acreage under hops began about the year 1885. I attribute the change to unfair foreign competition, often keeping our market prices below the cost of production.

Local Rates.

Local rates have increased very considerably, but the Agricultural Rates Act has counterbalanced this. The tenant farmer got the full benefit of the Act, none of it went to the landlord.

Capital Invested.

The capital employed by the landlord in the production and curing of hops, in the primary cost of buildings, oast houses, cottages, hoppers' houses, and proportion of usual farm buildings, I would estimate at £75 per acre, and if the cost of land were included I should add £75 to £100, as hops are invariably grown on the best land on the farm. The tenant's capital would be £25 to £30 per acre of primary outlay.

I estimate the tenant's outgoings per acre as follows:—Rent and interest on necessary buildings £8, labour £19, manure £9, machinery, implements and tackle of all sorts, including hop poles and wire work, £7 10s.; rates and taxes 10s., other outgoings £6. This includes nothing for the tenant's own labour and supervision, or for interest on capital invested.

Annual Outgoings. 1053

I would suggest a duty on imported hops of 40s. per cwt. That was the original duty. This would lessen importations, and more especially so in cheap years, and thus raise the price of the home produce, bringing about an increase of planting. Under favourable conditions British hop growing would expand from 25 % to 50 % on present acreage. On every additional acre planted manual labour to the extent of £17 would be employed. Therefore, if the acreage were increased 50 %, or say 24,000 acres, this would mean an expenditure of upwards of £400,000 per annum, entirely earned in the country. And indirectly a considerable sum would have to be added to this. More money is earned by the labourer in hop work than in any other class of agriculture. It would also be a distinct advantage to the London poor, as more pickers would be needed, and many of us draw nearly all our pickers from London. A preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any change in the character of my industry.

Duties.

Effect on Labour.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 215.

1054

MR. FREDERICK NEAME

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Macknade, Faversham, Kent).

I cultivate (irrespective of farms carried on for their owners) 1,977 acres, including woodland. The cropping is approximately: Arable, with corn, roots and green crops, 781 acres; grass, 442; woods, 203; fruit plantation and orchards, 143; hops, 408 acres.

State of Hop Growing.

My experience of hop-growing, in which I have been engaged for 26 years, was satisfactory up to 6 years ago. Since 1899 the results have been unsatisfactory; the year 1904 remains to be proved, as, owing to the home-grown hops having been largely superseded by foreign importations, a large proportion of my crop is as yet unsold. For the 5 years to 1898 the farms which I held yielded me an average return of slightly over 10 % interest per annum on the tenant's capital employed; but during the 5 years to 1903 there has been an average annual loss on the same farms of 3½ %. The cultivation is on four holdings situated in different parts of East Kent, in each case comprising hop-land of a superior description. My experience has been a fairly favourable one, and many farms would show a worse record. I have particulars of two farms in good parts of East Kent, cultivated for hops on a tolerably large scale, which, over the same periods, show respectively—on the first 5 years an average annual profit of 7½ % and 7 %, and on the second 5 years an average annual loss of 2 % and 9 %. The hop crop is especially subject to the vicissitudes of season and consequently the yield varies. The difference between a moderate and a heavy yield is as much as 100 %, and to remunerate the growers there must be a variation in price corresponding in a measure to the shortness or abundance of the yield. Till recently there have been these variations, but of late the effect of a generally abundant season, owing to the double glutting of the market by our own and foreign surpluses, has been to lower the price to a level that is considerably below the cost of production. In the event of a large home surplus when the foreign crop may happen to be a short one there is no relief for the home grower in the foreign markets. He is practically barred from entering these. The duty in the United States is very heavy—56s. per cwt. at present. It has been higher. On the other hand, when the crop abroad happens to be excessive and that grown here is short, the foreigner has a ready outlet for his surplus on our open market, to the very great detriment and disaster of the home grower, again reducing the price below what it would be in the natural order of things. We cannot improve the position of the hop industry except by something that should enable us to break down the wall of foreign tariffs, that most unfair burden which prevents us from competing in their own market whilst the foreigner can come here and break our market down at critical times. In 1904, after three years of shortage here, followed by the shortest crop within the last 16 years, and the smallest acreage in the last 40 years, the price was kept down by the unrestricted inflow of the United States and Continental produce to a figure little in excess of that due upon a series of average years. They are able, owing to their protective duties, to make so large a profit at home that they can flood our market with their surplus hops at a price less than we can grow them at. If we happen to have a short crop we should want a price of £7, £8 or £10, but they may be satisfied with £4 or £5. The United States have recently increased their plantation by 10,000 acres, the greater part or the whole produce of which, in the event of an average Continental crop, must be expected here on our open market, to be sold for what it may fetch. If this is permitted to continue, a still further large reduction of the British acreage and its accompanying loss to the labourers and their families and others affected by the cultivation and harvesting of the crops is inevitable. Here is one of our most important rural industries, that acre for acre provides more employment for a good class of skilled country labour than probably any other, already reduced from 71,789 acres in 1878 to 47,938 in 1903, threatened with still further diminution by reason of inequitable tariffs. The average price of hops for 1902 and 1903 was £5 12s. per cwt. In 1901 it was 40s.

1055

Causes of Change.

1056

There has not been in the East Kent district any difficulty with regard to the quality and supply of labour. The only material change has been in parts where the hop plantations have been grubbed. There the labourers have naturally drifted away for want of employment. The rate of wages has not varied to any extent for some years.

Labour.

I do not see that foreign growers can have any great advantage over us. In the United States they possibly have some virgin land that may not require so much manuring the first few years.

Foreign Methods.

Local rates have become more burdensome in recent years, but this is a matter of secondary importance compared with the foreign pressure.

Local Rates.

1057 Capital Invested.

The amount of capital employed in the production of hops per acre by the landlord is about £60, that is £25 on the oasts, and £35 per acre on the cottages. Hop-pickers' lodgings sometimes are found by the landlord, sometimes by the tenant. They would come to about £10 per acre; and if to that you add the value of the land, and the ordinary necessary stables, cart lodges, implement and bullock sheds, yards, &c., on a purely hop farm you might put another £60. The capital outlay of the tenant is: first cost of the hop poles or wire work, preparing the ground, providing plants, and planting and raising, with an additional small sum per acre in horses and implements, in all from £30 to £50 per acre. Besides, the tenant has the annual outlay of another £30 to £50 per acre (some growers will tell you £70) for ordinary cultivation, winter ploughing or digging, trimming and pruning the hops in the spring, training them to the poles or the wirework, putting up string to the wires for the hops to climb on, training the bines during the summer, the picking, washing the hops, drying, coal, etc. Landlord's capital I put roughly at £100 to £130, tenant's £60 to £100. On the better class of hop-lands the total capital employed per acre is £200, of which half is provided by the landlord, and half by the tenant. The cultivation of hops is the most expensive branch of the agricultural industry. The value of the fee-simple of hop-land varies, being, on the very best class of land, as much as £90 or £100 an acre. Inferior secondary land might give £50 or £60, and other qualities lower—£60 to £70 an acre is an average. I put the rent inclusive of that on necessary buildings at £5 to £6 per acre, labour £20, manure £8 to £10; machinery, implements and tackle, including pole or wirework (this is the annual wear and tear) with the coir yarn that is used for training, the materials for aphid wash when the plant is attacked with blight, brimstone, coals, pocketing, &c., £11 per acre; rates and taxes £1; commission and carriage £2 to £4.

Annual Outgoings.

1058

Duties.

I would like to see a duty placed on all imported hops of £2 per cwt., as a means of keeping alive an industry that provides so large a proportion of rural work. The advantages I anticipate would be:—

1st.—The cessation of displanting;

2nd.—A gradual increase in the cultivation of hops on British soil, with the accompanying resuscitation of dormant capital existing in the oasts, buildings and cottages that stand now only as a melancholy monument of the defeat of a once thriving industry;

3rd.—A very considerable increase in the employment of rural labour, with accompanying small trades;

4th.—It would give an impetus to the feeding and fattening of cattle for the sake of manure;

5th.—It would increase the trade in artificial manures and other trades, such as in sulphur, coals, coir yarn, jute, &c.

These things would be brought about without any permanent or material effect upon the price of hops beyond that which may be reasonable and equitable. There is ample land for the supply of the whole of the home requirements, and the increase of home competition would quickly meet the demand, and bring the price to the normal level. The advantage that would accrue to the labourer would be the increased demand for his services. If the foreign importation is entirely replaced by the home-grown produce, then the increase of acreage would be one-third of the present plantation, i.e., 16,000 or 20,000 acres. This would call into employment upwards of 6,000 men at constant work; 1,800 men 3 to 4 weeks in the year; 9,000 women 8 to 10 weeks in training; 96,000 women and children 3 to 4 weeks in gathering, representing an increased wages payment of £400,000 per annum, and calling into play a capital of £3,000,000. If the duty which I am suggesting were put on to foreign hops, it would not induce cultivation in the Colonies to any extent. Should a preference be shewn to the Colonies, possibly New Zealand might grow hops.

Effect on Labour.

1059

WITNESS No. 216.

Written Evidence.

MR. MICHAEL NETHERSOLE

(Hop-grower, Staple, near Dover).

I farm 28 acres of hops.

The state of hop growing in my district is good. Any change in the acreage of hop growing is due to low prices and foreign competition.

I would suggest that a sufficient duty should be put on imported hops to place us on an equal footing with the foreigner.

1060

WITNESS No. 217.

MR. JOSEPH M. PARRY

(Hop-grower, Cider and Perry Maker and Farmer, Leominster, Herefordshire).

I cultivate 620 acres, 88 hops, and 532 general crops.

State of Hop Growing.

In recent years prices have ruled too low to meet expenses on an average of years. When a good crop is grown the market is over-loaded, and with a small growth foreign hops prevent an adequate price being obtained. Hop growing has become much less remunerative. It is difficult to state the exact extent owing to the nature of the business, but many growers have had to abandon growing owing to the losses incurred, and many only keep their yards going in the hope that the great reduction in acreage may bring an

improvement in average prices. Profits have certainly not increased in proportion to the acreage cultivated, and although each year shows a diminished acreage it is evident that when an average crop is grown, low prices will again rule. This year it would have been so, for foreign hops were offered at from 60s. to 70s. on this market at the beginning of the season, and it was only owing to the partial failure that prices improved. In recent years the markets have become glutted before anything like the whole crop has been moved, with disastrous results. This is chiefly attributable to the want of confidence caused by the constant fear of foreign hops. Buyers are afraid to operate except from hand to mouth, and if brewers will not buy, the market at once becomes stagnant. In 1901 I farmed 60 acres of hops as a trustee, growing a large crop, but owing to a glutted market there was a loss of over £10 per acre.

We have plenty of labour, including pickers, and there has not been much change in recent years. The rate of wages has not changed much for the summer months, but for the winter less wages have to be accepted in a good many instances. **Labour.**

The change in the acreage of hops began about 10 years ago and I attribute it almost entirely to free imports of low priced foreign hops, the fear of which undermines the market every year. **Causes of Change.**

Market organisation has changed very much in recent years. A few years ago merchants bought the bulk of the crops in our market directly after harvest, holding them till brewers were in want. In recent years, owing to free imports of low priced hops, they have been so continuously undersold that most of the old merchant firms are ruined, and there is now no confidence to buy unless a ready market can be found. The result is that unless brewers buy largely just in the season the market becomes glutted, even with a moderate supply, and ruinous prices have to be accepted, especially by the weaker growers. If there were a duty of 40s. on the imports, merchants would have security to relieve the market at prices not quite so ruinous as have had to be experienced with a good crop such as in 1901. If the present conditions continue there is nothing to prevent a complete stagnation of the market again when an average crop is grown, in spite of the present small acreage. With the acreage of recent years there should be no such thing as a glutted market, for with a full average crop, sufficient for a year's consumption cannot be grown. The old system of the merchants buying from the grower is preferable to selling to the brewer, because we have a buffer in the market, a means of relieving it. There was some speculation in those days, a merchant would buy the crop at a price. Now merchants will not buy hops at any price, and it is the expectation of the foreign hops, or the fear of dumping, which keeps the market from activity. The free import of cheap foreign hops has absolutely disorganised the Worcester market; and now, unless brewers buy in the season, at the time that it is well known the growers have to sell (because the majority of the growers cannot hold the hops), there is no one else to buy them, and the result is that they must be sold at what are known as present day's speculative prices. That is the only price you can get. **Market Organisation.**

Local rates have become more burdensome. The local rates amounted to:—1s. 7d. in the £ in 1898; 2s. in the £ in 1899; 2s. 1d. in the £ in 1900; 2s. 1d. in the £ in 1901; 2s. 2d. in the £ in 1902; 2s. 3d. in the £ in 1903; and 2s. 8d. in the £ in 1904. **Local Rates.**

In the production of hops the capital employed by the landlord, in provision of kilns and rooms, the hop pickers' lodgings, &c., would be about £30 an acre, but if the cottages and land are taken into account the amount would be about £110 per acre. The capital employed by the tenant is about £60 per acre. **Capital Invested.**

My annual outgoings are: Rent and interest on buildings £7 per acre; labour, excluding picking, from £6 to £8 per acre; labour in picking and curing £1 per cwt.; manure £5 to £8 per acre; upkeep of poles, wirework, interest on capital, &c., £6 to £7 per acre; rates and taxes 12s. 3d. per acre; and other outgoings about £3 per acre. **Annual Outgoings.**

I suggest an import duty of 40s. on all foreign hops coming to this country. The unfair advantage which the foreign grower has would be overcome, and the surplus we get each year could not be dumped at any price as hitherto. The very low priced hops also could not come into our market under 60s. per cwt. The result would be restored confidence and security for the buyers, with steadier markets and more uniform prices. This would mean a fair price with an average crop, which would be an especial advantage to small growers who in recent years have been the greatest sufferers, and it would lead to an immediate increase in acreage with evident benefit to the labourers, and ultimate advantage to the brewers. The labourers would get a great share of the advantage in increased employment owing to an increased acreage, with the natural improvement in wages consequent on a greater demand for labour. The amount of advantage would be about £8 per acre for every acre planted, and about £1 for every cwt. grown. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not require any change with regard to growing hops, for I presume that under any circumstances we should have free exchange with them, and with such fair trade I believe we could hold our own. It is probable that British hop growing under fair conditions would expand to the extent of 15,000 to 20,000 acres, which would mean an additional amount spent on labour of £300,000. **Duties.**

Effect on Labour.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 218.

MR. JAMES ADAMS PARTRIDGE

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Woodston Manor, Tenbury, Worcestershire).

I farm about 400 acres, 150 of hops and 250 of other crops, principally grass orchard.

[Mr. Partridge gave evidence corroborative of that given by the previous witness (Mr. Parry) in regard to the general state of hop-growing. He also agreed with Mr. Parry's proposals as to duties.] **State of Hop Growing.**

1065 Cultivation.

We employ much better methods than the Germans, and produce double the crop they do per acre. They have an advantage in low-priced labour. The average growths per acre for 5 years ending 1903 are as follows:—

	Average per acre.			Growth per annum.		
	<i>Cuts.</i>			<i>Cuts.</i>		
England	10	..	..	479,000	..	..
Australasia	10	..	..	15,000	..	..
France	8½	..	..	64,000	..	..
America	8	..	..	360,000	..	..
Belgium	7	..	..	66,000	..	..
Russia	6	..	..	72,000	..	..
Germany	5	..	..	440,000	..	..
Bohemia	6	..	..	166,000	..	..
Austria	4	..	..	56,000	..	..

Local Rates.

Local rates have become more burdensome. Our rates are now nearly 4s. in the £.

Capital Invested.

The capital employed by the landlord per acre is—Value of land from £40 to £100 per acre, average £70; cost of kilns or oasts £30; cost of cottages £30; cost of hop-pickers' barracks £10—a total of £140. The capital employed by the tenant per acre is—Cost of wire trellis £30; cost of implements, machinery, tools, appliances, and horses necessary £16—a total of £46.

1066

Annual Outgoings.

I estimate my annual outgoings per acre as follows:—Rent £3 to £5, average, £4 10s.; interest on £70 at 5%, £3 10s.; labour, excluding picking, £8; labour, picking, curing and delivering a crop of 10 cwt. at 24s. per cwt., £12; hop pockets £1; washes £1 10s.; coal, coke, and sulphur £1; manure £8; horse keep £5; deterioration of hop plants and wire work £3 10s.; interest on capital £2 10s.—making a total of £50 10s.

WITNESS No. 219.

MR. JOHN POWELL

(Hop and Fruit Grower and Farmer, Lower Wick, near Worcester; representing the Worcestershire Chamber of Agriculture).

I can give evidence on hop growing, grazing, fruit growing, milk selling, and general agriculture. I farm 600 acres in two farms, 130 are hops, 10 bush fruit, 20 standard fruit, 50 or 60 tillage, and nearly 400 grass.

State of Hop Growing.

1067

All branches of farming are depressed; if we have a few more years like this we shall all be broken up. Hops are the more important branch in the western part of Worcestershire and the eastern part of Herefordshire. Up till this year hop growing has been fairly remunerative, but not as it was 7 or 8 years back. We have not had the price for the hops. When we have grown a small crop we have had hardly sufficient price to recompense us for the outlay, at any rate not in the proportions we used to have. If we get an excellent season and a very big crop, the price is so low that it has not paid us to produce them. In 1901 we grew very nearly 2 years' consumption, and the result was that hops were sold at about the cost of picking and drying, and nearly that with some of them.

Reduction in Hop Acreage.

The remuneration for hop growing has so fallen off as to be serious. The acreage under cultivation has been reduced very considerably. I have here a statement from which you will see that nearly 100 years ago there was an acreage somewhat similar to what it is now.

ANNUAL AMOUNT OF HOP DUTY AND ACREAGE.

YEAR.				ACRES.		DUTY £.		YEAR.				ACRES.		DUTY £.	
1808	..	..	..	38,436	251,089	1831	..	..	..	47,129	174,864				
1809	..	..	..	38,357	63,452	1832	..	..	..	47,101	139,018				
1810	..	..	..	38,265	73,514	1833	..	..	..	49,187	156,905				
1811	..	..	..	38,401	157,025	1834	..	..	..	51,273	189,713				
1812	..	..	..	38,498	30,561	1835	..	..	..	53,817	235,207				
1813	..	..	..	39,521	131,482	1836	..	..	..	55,422	200,332				
1814	..	..	..	40,575	140,292	1837	..	..	..	56,323	178,578				
1815	..	..	..	42,150	123,878	1838	..	..	..	55,045	171,556				
1816	..	..	..	44,219	46,302	1839	..	..	..	52,305	205,556				
1817	..	..	..	46,293	66,522	1840	..	..	..	44,805	34,091				
1818	..	..	..	48,593	199,465	1841	..	..	..	45,769	146,159				
1819	..	..	..	51,014	242,076	1842	..	..	..	43,720	169,776				
1820	..	..	..	50,048	138,330	1843	..	..	..	43,156	133,431				
1821	..	..	..	45,662	154,609	1844	..	..	..	44,485	140,322				
1822	..	..	..	43,776	203,724	1845	..	..	..	48,058	158,008				
1823	..	..	..	41,458	26,058	1846	..	..	..	51,948	242,929				
1824	..	..	..	43,419	148,832	1847	..	..	..	52,328	215,805				
1825	..	..	..	46,718	24,317	1848	..	..	..	49,232	212,416				
1826	..	..	..	50,471	269,331	1849	..	..	..	42,798	79,791				
1827	..	..	..	49,485	140,848	1850	..	..	..	43,127	232,576				
1828	..	..	..	48,365	172,027	1851	..	..	..	43,246	129,580				
1829	..	..	..	46,135	38,398	1852	..	..	..	46,157	244,824				
1830	..	..	..	46,726	88,047	1853	..	..	..	49,367	152,677				
						1854	..	..	..	53,823	47,369				

1068

The acreage has been reduced gradually. It was 51,843 acres in 1899, and to-day there are about 47,700, so that it has gone down 4,000 acres in 5 years. That reduced acreage is not due to any diminished demand for hops, but because there has been rather more difficulty in the cultivation, and the prices have been so unremunerative when we have got a fair crop that people have stopped growing. The cost of cultivating an acre of hops varies considerably. I spent nearly £40 an acre this year, and lost my crop afterwards. An average crop of 6 cwt. to the acre, sold at £9, would yield £54, a profit of £14 an acre. But this year the land only yielded 1½ cwt. The manual labour comes to about £15 an acre. If you have much washing to do you put £1 an acre on for every time they are washed. It costs about 25s. a cwt. to pick and cure hops, or an average of £9 to £10 an acre. Taking one year with another, the cost of cultivation would be about £30 an acre. This year, owing to extreme blight, it cost £40 an acre. The harvesting is about ½ of the whole cost of the crop.

Cost of Cultivation.

The real cause of the low price of hops is the dumping of foreign surplus stocks. When we get a very low crop, instead of having a remunerative price as formerly, it is very little above the average, owing to foreign competition. We get them from the United States, California or the Pacific Coast, Germany and Belgium. This year we had a large quantity of hops from Belgium; the whole of their crop practically came here.

Cause of Low Price.

Fruit growing has also become less remunerative. A good deal of the fruit this year is scarcely worth sending away. We had a very big crop at home, and when the middle of September or the beginning of October comes we get glutted with American and Canadian apples. 4,568,413 cwt. of apples were imported into England last year. I grow gooseberries, black currants, cherries, plums and apples. I do not grow apples for cider, but they are grown all round, and are so plentiful this year that ½ on the ground now are not worth picking up. The apples we grow are scarcely saleable when we have a big crop. This is due to American competition. We used to be able to store the harder kinds of apples and bring them out from November till March. That is all done away with owing to the importations of American apples. They send them larger and better looking than ours, and our old orchards have become practically useless. Green gooseberries pay as well as any small fruit; perhaps a bit better if you get into the market early. Black currants are a very remunerative fruit too, but practically all plantations have been suffering for 8 or 10 years from the currant gall mite, which has destroyed plants fearfully. Consequently, as we never get a full crop, half a crop can always make good prices.

State of Fruit Growing.

I milk 35 cows, and send the milk into Worcester. I graze about 150 cattle. Grazing profits have been almost unknown of late years. Cattle have been very unremunerative indeed. Milk pays fairly well. I am trying to sell more, but competition is very keen. Milk selling has been the salvation of many farmers, but is now becoming less remunerative, prices being lower than usual this autumn. There has been an immense demand for milk all over the country, and the production has increased wonderfully, but there is no demand locally for more milk than is produced. We can get the milk to Birmingham, but prices there are very low. The prices in most large towns are low. Hay is exceedingly cheap, so much extra meadow land being mown.

Dairying and Grazing.

I am pretty close to Worcester, and we get a fair supply of common labourers. At the commencement of the South African War labour became very scarce, and the 2s. a week rise then granted is being continued. You get very few good men. Skilled workmen and stockmen are not plentiful. The ordinary labourers are worse than they used to be. I attribute that to lack of interest in their work. My labourers remain with me, as a rule. Some have been with me 20 years. Those are a few old men who know their work and can do anything on a farm. They seem to take an interest in it. It is with the younger generation that we find most fault. You cannot get a young man. They will not take to horses or milking because there is Sunday labour, so we have great difficulty in getting the milking done. The young men get away to the railways, where they get more money than we can afford to give them.

Labour.

Increased supplies from abroad have unquestionably been the cause of the change in the condition of agriculture. 1873 saw the commencement of the fall in the value of corn; 10 years later stock followed; rents fell 30%; much land was put into permanent seeds to curtail the expense of farming, and labour became dearer.

Causes of Change.

We have no trouble about railway rates, but they are not very encouraging. In the conveyance of fruit we suffer most. The Midland Railway send circulars stating that the fruit is to be collected and delivered in 2-ton lots. The difficulty is for a grower to gather fruit from his neighbours and make up a 2-ton lot. One man does not like to expose his market to his neighbour. It is just possible that an improvement in this respect could be made by developing the system of co-operation. It has not been tried at all in our district. English railway companies classify different kinds of fruit under different headings, and charge more for some than for others. On the Continent there is no such classification, and it all comes forward at a considerably less rate than ours. The rate from Worcester to London, for black currants, is about 28s. a ton in 2-ton lots. They can be brought from 250 miles inland in France to the London market for less than that. To bring hops from Bavaria and Germany to this country costs 3s. to 4s. per cwt., from the United States 5s. per cwt., from San Francisco 10s. per cwt., and 1s. per cwt., from Belgium; it costs about 1s. to send them to Dudley in the Black Country (about 30 miles), and 1s. 8d. or 1s. 10d. to London. For grain and flour for 20 miles the British rate is 5s. per ton, the German 3s. 6d., the Belgian 3s. 4d., and the Dutch 3s. 7d. For English live cattle from Newcastle to Leeds the rate is £2 8s. 6d., and for foreign cattle £1 11s.; from Newcastle to London, English cattle £5 19s. 3d., and foreign cattle £4 per truck load. Those figures prove that our railways are not favouring the landed interests very much.

Railway Rates.

Our Agricultural Co-operative Supply Association originated through the action of the Implement Manufacturers' Federation, who were getting rather hard to deal with. We buy our implements, seeds, manures, feeding stuffs, &c., through this Association, and get a 10% advantage in the purchase.

Co-operation.

There is not very much to complain of in the condition of cottage accommodation.

Cottage Accommodation. Education.

Education is very expensive to us, but in agricultural education a little has been done by the County Council Technical Committee, and we are deriving some benefit from it. Some of the young men are learning to prune and shear, do hedging, &c. That might be pursued further. County Councils might have technical farms where boys could be taught to milk, and where trials might be made of different methods of cultivation.

1073 Foreign Advantages.

In foreign countries crops are grown and stock produced on a large scale, and the value of land is much lower than in England. Seasons too, are to be more depended upon.

Local Rates.

Local rates have risen from 3s. 4d. in 1899 to 4s. 8d. at present.

Annual Outgoings.

One farm is my own, and the other I rent at 47s. an acre. Labour costs 93s. per acre (hops are very expensive to cultivate), feeding stuffs and manure 30s.; machinery and repairs, including new machinery, 7s. 6d.; and rates and taxes 7s.

Agricultural Rates Act.

Instead of being assessed at 3s. 4d. we are assessed at 1s. 8d. on the land under the Rates Act. We have secured the whole advantage of it. I have not heard of a single instance where the landlord has taken any advantage.

Duties.

The adoption of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would give a stimulus to agriculture, perhaps more in meat than corn, as the prices must show some improvement. In 1886 there were 15,535,297 acres of permanent pasture with 6,646,683 cattle. This year there are 17,000,000 acres of permanent pasture with 6,858,352 cattle, or an increase of only 200,000 cattle on 1,500,000 acres increase of permanent pasture, or 1 beast to 7½ acres. In 1886 there were 25,520,000 sheep against 25,207,178 at present, or about 300,000 less on the increased 1½ millions acres of grass. So the 1½ million acres of grass are practically unproductive. The production of wheat has gone down this year 11,000,000 bushels compared with last year. These show that the production of the country is very much less, and is continually decreasing and will continue to decrease until cultivation pays better. A duty on flour is more desirable than a duty on wheat. We should get the benefit of it from the offals. When we had the 1s. duty, offals were 5s. to 10s. a ton cheaper in less than a year. The ordinary consumer would not suffer in consequence of a duty of 2s. a quarter on wheat. The price of bread did not rise when the 1s. a quarter was put on.

1074

Effect on Production.

Hops.

We should like to see £2 a cwt. on hops. The duty to Germany is 7s. per cwt., and the duty to the United States is 52s. Two years ago we could have sent some hops to Germany because they had not a big crop, and we should have been pleased to sell at a very low price, but they charged 7s. a cwt. duty, which was of course a great handicap. We can always grow as many hops as are wanted in England. At present I do not look forward to any expansion. The cultivation of hops has been decreasing for the last 4 years. The 4,000 acres we have lost in 4 years have caused a loss in labour alone of £85,000, putting it on a low estimate of 5 cwt. per acre. That labour is chiefly recruited from the poorest of the poor. In Worcestershire we get the very lowest from the Black Country to come and help us to pick. The same in Kent; they get the people from the East end of London. If all this money is lost to these people it makes matters worse in the towns.

Effect on Labour.

Maize.

I daresay it is a philanthropic idea of Mr. Chamberlain's that he is helping the poor man by exempting maize from a duty. I defy anyone in England to pick more than half a-dozen poor men out of 100 who buy maize to feed their pigs with. If the labourer can get some barley meal and sharps he will never buy any maize, and if he could get a bit of pea flour to top them up with, the maize may go anywhere. Maize is too strong for young stock or young pigs or young horses. It is chiefly used in England by the big horse-keepers and the brewers and distillers.

1075

Empire Trade.

27 % of the wheat and flour, 8 % of the other grain, 21 % of the meat, 14 % of the butter, 71 % of the cheese, and 14 % of the fruit and nuts which reached our shores last year came from within the Empire.

WITNESS No. 220.

MR. FRANK REEVE

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Lea Farm, Peasmarsh, Sussex).

I farm 1,700 acres, and I grow 175 acres of hops.

State of Hop Growing.

Since the year 1887 the number of acres under hops has steadily decreased until at present it is less than half. In the parish of Icklesham, in 1887, there were 300 acres of hops, to-day there are only 30 acres. In the whole county there are now only 4,700 acres of hops, whereas in 1887 there were 10,300. Taking the whole English plantation the reduction of acreage from 1887 to 1904 equals 23,533 acres, representing a decrease of wages paid to labour of about £470,000 a year. Profits are 25 % to 30 % less since 1884. In 1884 we made about £3 profit. For three successive years, 1885, 1886, and 1887, we made only 32s., and then the acreage began to go down. Farmers grubbed their hops.

1076 Labour.

We are not so well off for good workmen as we used to be. Many of our best hands have left and found other employment, because we had to lower their wages after 1887 to 12s. a week, owing to the unremunerative state of hop growing. We have hardly any good hands, but plenty of the inferior ones. We have no difficulty in getting pickers. There has not been much change in the rate of wages since 1887, but the cost of production per acre has rather increased, as we do not get quite so much work done as formerly. We are paying our ordinary hands about as much as we used to pay our best hands, but you want about 5 men to do what 4 men did formerly. The inferior men cannot get through anything like the work.

Causes of Change.

The change in the acreage of hop growing began in 1887. The reduction was caused entirely by the low prices realized for the crops, and consequent loss to the grower.

Cottage Accommodation.

Cottages have improved considerably during the last 15 years.

Local Rates.

Local rates have nearly doubled since the institution of the County, District, and Rural Councils.

Capital Invested.

The capital employed in the production and curing of hops per acre by the landlord I estimate at £500 for 20 acres for cost of oasthouses. There are sufficient oasthouses in this district, many now standing idle, to cure twice the quantity of hops now grown. The tenant's capital sunk in horses, tackle, machinery, and cash for wages to carry on for one year, on 20 acres of hops, until after picking, I estimate at £1,400 to £1,500. The cost of growing an acre of hops, and curing, packing, rail carriage, and commission, rent, rates, and interest is from £50 to £60.

Cost of keeping a team, trade bills for repairs, general wear and tear, and cart and mate, £10 per acre ; manures £7, sulphur 16s., hop wash 20s. to 30s., to replace poles and strings, including first cost carried over 10 years, £6 ; cost of raising plantation, carried over 10 years, 10s. ; cost of manual labour, including tying, £8 per acre ; interest on capital, £3 10s. ; rent and taxes, including rent of oasthouses and taking best land £3 10s. ; cost of picking 12 cwt. per acre, including pole pullers, measurers, hop dryers, and pressers, £10 ; cost of material for curing, hop pockets, use of green bags, bins, oast hairs, &c., rail, carriages, and commission, £5 for 12 cwt. Total, £55 11s. per acre to grow 12 cwt. I do not see how it can be done for less. This only relates to the cost of hop growing. My annual outgoings on the other land would be : Rent, 30s. ; manure, 2s. ; labour, 5s. ; rates and taxes, 3s. per acre on 1,500 acres, which is nearly all grazing.

Annual Outgoings. 1077

A duty on imported hops would help to bring back into cultivation the abandoned acres, and bring into use the hop oasts and the cottages. Our cottages are not empty, but they are occupied by people who do not work on the land, but in the stone quarries, &c. I do not think anything under 40s. per cwt. would do much good. The advantage would be that the foreigner could not put hops on this market under 40s. per cwt., and cause us to sell ours under cost of picking, which he sometimes does. The share of advantage to the labourer would be half the cost of growing. A preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my industry. The probabilities of expansion in British hop growing, under favourable conditions, are 50 % and a fair profit to the grower. A proportionate amount of additional labour would be employed.

Duties.

Preference.
Expansion.

1078

WITNESS No. 221.

MR. WILLIAM SANTER

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Bokes Farm, Hawkhurst).

My holding is a little over 500 acres. There are 56 acres hops, 60 corn, and the remainder grass land and wood.

Hop growing is in a declining state. This was mainly brought about by the very disastrous years we experienced in 1894, 1895, 1896 and 1897, which were utterly unremunerative. Cultivation was carried on at a great loss, this started grubbing, and the driving out of the small growers, which is still going on, notwithstanding the better prices of the last 3 years. Taking the last 22 years, profits have diminished. The acreage has decreased, but that has not added to the remuneration. The average price of my growth in the years 1883 to 1893 inclusive was 103s. 4½d. per cwt., but taking 1894 to 1904 inclusive the average price fell to 77s., and in 1895 I sold hops as low as 25s., in 1896 33s., and in 1901 again at 25s. If you take the official returns of the average prices over the same years you will find that it was 106s. 2d. in the first 11 years and 80s. 5d. in the last 11 years. I show an average price of 98s. 2½d. on the 22 years.

State of Hop
Growing.

1079

We have had a difficulty as regards skilled labour for general hop work. That was really brought about through the labourers being out of employment in 1895 and 1896. The small grower in those years had to grub hops, wages were reduced, and that drove the best skilled labour into the towns and out of the country. The rate of wages has since gone up owing to the scarcity of the labour. The skilled labourers are now coming back to the land. Considering the higher rents they have to pay in the towns they find they are better off in the country. Boys and lads for farm work are out of the question. On the whole it has not been difficult to obtain a supply of pickers.

Labour.

The railway rates for packed hops to London were about 37s. per ton in 1886. Now that is reduced to 20s. per ton from Hawkhurst to London.

Railway Rates.

The acreage of hops in my parish has diminished from 426 acres in 1886 to about 310 acres in the present year. The change began in 1886. The cause of the reduced acreage is the foreign competition, the low prices obtained for the crops and the losses entailed by the cultivation. It is not through any want of skill on our part that our hops have gone out of cultivation. Within recent years there has been great improvement among hop growers in regard to agricultural education and knowledge as to the value of different artificial manures. Improved methods of cultivation, training, and curing have been adopted.

Causes of Change.

I consider foreign growers have an unjust advantage over British growers ; they are not compelled to mark their hops in any way either with the name of grower, parish, county or country, or date of year grown, thereby enabling the hops to be held over for years. In short crop seasons in this country they put them on the London market often as yearlings, thereby robbing the British grower of his just reward of better prices when we get a few hops in bad seasons at a great expense. The German merchants are in the habit of coming to this country for about three months each year and trading direct with the brewers. They practically keep no offices in this country other than small invoice offices. The hops are sent direct to the brewery ; the money is sent direct abroad ; and therefore there is no possibility of getting any income tax from them.

Foreign
Competition.

1080

Rates have increased to a serious extent within the last 10 years and now we have another burden in the shape of a 7d. education rate.

Local Rates.

The capital employed by the landlord in the production and curing of hops per acre is practically limited to the provision of oasts for drying. I estimate for this £30 per acre. The capital employed by tenant varies from £60 to £70 per acre in the case of highly farmed hops.

Capital Invested.

The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are : £3 for rent and interest on necessary buildings, £10 for labour to commencement of picking, £10 for manure, £7 for machinery, implements, &c., poles and wire-work, 8s. for rates and taxes, £15 for labour and other expenses incurred from commencement of picking hops until the hops are sold. This is upon an average crop. For a heavy crop the outgoings are more, for a light crop less.

Annual Outgoings.

1081 Duties.

Effect on Labour.

Preference.

I would suggest a duty of 40s. per cwt. on all imported hops. This would give stability to values, prevent hops dropping to those low and disastrous prices, as they did in 1895, and other years of large world crops, help to pay the taxation of the country, and would not increase the price of beer. The share of advantage that would accrue to the labourer would be £10 per acre for every acre planted and £1 per cwt. for every cwt. grown on that acre.

A preferential arrangement by this country with the Colonies would not require me to make any changes in the character of my industry. We could grow all the hops this country requires.

WITNESS No. 222.

CAPTAIN PERCY W. SEWARD

(Farmer and Hop-grower, Weston, Petersfield, Hants).

I farm 1,100 acres, of which 135 are in hops.

1082 State of Hop Growing.

Hop growers are not so well off as formerly, as in "short" years prices do not rise in inverse ratio to the shortage, owing to the market being flooded with foreign hops. Consequently short crops, which formerly were sometimes as profitable as "bumpers" by reason of enhanced values and reduced expenses, are now more or less disastrous. Hop growing has become less remunerative in recent years. The average price for the 10 years ending with the year 1884 was £8 15s. per cwt.; for the 10 years ending 1894 £6 per cwt.; and for the 10 years ending 1904 £5 4s. per cwt. Had it not been for the higher prices we have made this year for our hops this last price would have worked out at even a lower figure. Profits have considerably diminished, and whilst prices have fallen, the cost of production has increased from £10 to £12 per acre, or over 25%. Rent is the same, but the expenses have been more heavy. We have had more difficulty as regards combating pests, blight, mould, &c. That has become general of late years, and is where the principal increase would come in. We have to do these things every year now, where formerly they only came about once in 2-3 years.

Labour.

We have not experienced any difficulty with regard to labour or hop-pickers. The quality of skilled labour is not so high as formerly. The rate of wages of labourers has slightly risen in recent years.

Causes of Change.

The change in the acreage under cultivation is entirely due to the importation of foreign hops. The foreigner has a free market here for his surplus stock, which he sends to be sold for what it will fetch, whether it is wanted or not; whilst in years of abundance at home and scarcity abroad the English grower cannot compete in foreign markets owing to prohibitive duties. Foreign surpluses are therefore dumped down in this country year after year, and are stored sometimes for very lengthy periods, acting as a "bear" to the English market, and militating against remunerative prices being obtained for English hops. Foreign hops imported in 1885—the record year for foreign imported hops as far as quantity is concerned—have been sold in our market during the current season—in 1904.

1083

Local Rates.

Local rates have, approximately, doubled in the past 12 years.

Capital Invested.

I put the actual value of the land at £65, and if the landlord provides oasts and extra cottages, £30 per acre must be added, making the landlord's capital £95. Where the tenant provides oasts and extra cottages, as in my case, his capital would be £114 per acre; if these buildings are provided by the landlord, £84.

Annual Outgoings.

The annual outgoings per acre on my farm are: Rent, &c. (not interest), £3 10s.; labour, £25 3s. 6d.; manure, £11; up-keep of machinery, wirework, horses, &c., £11 6s.; rates and taxes, 7s.; various, £5—a total of £56 6s. 6d.

Duties.

I suggest a duty of 40s. per cwt. upon imported hops, and I anticipate the result of this would be that in a very few years we should be able to produce in this country all the hops required for home consumption. A 40s. duty would produce an immediate expansion amounting ultimately to 50% in the acreage. The labourer employed in hop growing earns 20s. per week on an average throughout the year; employed in ordinary agriculture his wages would average 15s. per week, at most. Considering the vast increase in expenditure on labour alone as compared with ordinary agriculture the inference is obvious that the labourer would derive an advantage. In ordinary agriculture the amount paid per acre for labour would be about £1 18s. In hop growing the amount would average £22. In our own case it works out rather higher than that. This, calculated on a possible increase of 25,000 acres, means an addition of £500,000 to the earnings of the British labourer, and the price of his pint of beer would still be twopence. A preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not require any change in the character of our industry. As a rule the quality of foreign hops is very much below the English. There are foreign hops and foreign hops in the same way that there are good English hops and bad English hops. The difference between the mean for English hops and foreign hops would be from 25s. to 30s. per cwt. Looking at the advantage we have in quality, 40s. a cwt. is not too big a duty. If we send our hops away we have to pay a bigger duty than that in some instances.

1084

Preference.

American Contracts.

I know that recently dealers in foreign hops have been trying to obtain contracts for American hops for 7 years forward, and some brewers in the South of England have already made contracts in accordance with those offers. From a grower's point of view cold storage would simply mean that in a plentiful year brewers would take advantage of a moderate price and store for themselves. This would tend to level up the prices in a plentiful year and to level them down in a short year. There would not necessarily be need for large importations in a short year to provide a sufficient supply for the brewers, because, supposing hop growing returned to its former prosperity and we had 70,000 acres of hops, the brewers would store in a plentiful year and fall back on their stocks in a short year. The duty of 40s. per cwt. would not hit the brewer hard except on very rare occasions. There has only been one instance in the experience of living men, in 1882, when there was really a famine.

WITNESS No. 223.

MR. JOHN W. SMITH

(Hop-grower and Farmer, Thinghill Court, Hereford).

I occupy 1,020 acres of land, 200 acres of which is under hops.

The hop industry in the County of Hereford is in a depressed condition, and the acreage is steadily declining. In 1901 the acreage in Herefordshire was 7,497, in 1904 it was reduced to 6,767, a decrease of 10% in 4 years. The cost of labour and the great additional expense caused by the extra work which we of recent years have expended upon the growth of hops, both in washing and manuring, combined with the decrease in price, has so lessened the profits that hops have become unremunerative to the producer. The extra expenditure upon an acre of hops during the last 11 years as compared with the previous 11 years would be at least £4, and the average price during the last 11 years has decreased by about 27s. per cwt., equal to 25%. There has been an increase in the average growth per acre.

The rate of labourers' wages in this district has somewhat increased during the last 11 years, and the quality has deteriorated, but the supply of labour is quite equal to our needs.

The change in the acreage of hop growing is almost entirely due to the lessened prices during the last 11 years, coupled with the increased cost of production. We have suitable land and to spare to cultivate double the quantity of hops we grow at present, if prices were sufficient to make it remunerative.

The burden of local taxation has become much heavier recently, and is an additional handicap upon the industry. The new Education Act has laid a charge upon occupiers of land equal to a tax of 12d. in the £ upon their income, while the occupiers of houses alone are not rated at more than 1 penny on their income; and yet the advantages are shared in equal degree by all classes of the community.

I would suggest a duty of £1 per cwt. upon all foreign hops; this would preserve the industry from further shrinkage. Without a Customs duty the industry will gradually decay, and the large amount of employment which it gives will be lost to the country. As a matter of public policy it is desirable to protect hop growing. It is to the interests of the community and especially to the interests of the rural labourers that this employment should be promoted. On that ground we hope to receive some protection in the near future to keep the industry from entirely decaying. The competition from the Colonies would not injure our industry here, but if their hops are allowed to enter into this country free, we should have the same privileges with them. An additional labourer—at a wage of £50 per year—would be required for every 3 additional acres of hops planted. The shrinkage of the hop acreage in the country of something like 23,000 or 24,000 acres is a loss of £400,000, or £500,000 to the rural labourers alone. The annual loss during the last 4 years to the labourers in the County of Hereford is equal to £14,000.

State of Hop Growing.

Labour.

Causes of Change.

Local Rates.

Duties.

Preference.

Labour.

WITNESS No. 224.

Written Evidence.

MR. WALTER TICE

(Hop-grower, Runfold, Farnham).

I farm from 60 to 70 acres of hops, my other land being mostly grass.

Prices have been much too low recently, especially in those years when a large crop has been grown. The hops then scarcely paid for the picking and the result has been a heavy loss. The growing of hops has become less remunerative in recent years, though where washing has been carried on carefully, the grower has done much to prevent reduction of profit.

We have not had much difficulty about the supply of labour or pickers, though the quality of the labour seems to have deteriorated. At the time of the Boer War labour was scarce and the wages had to be increased so as to get the work done.

The change in the condition of hop growing has been brought about by low prices, which have ruined many of the small farmers. The change for the worse began when the large brewery companies were started.

From what I can learn the English hop-grower knows his business quite as well as, if not better than, the foreigner. I hear the foreigner can produce hops cheaper than we can.

The rates have become very burdensome and had it not been for the Agricultural Rates Act we would have had great difficulty in meeting them, especially now with the Education Rate added.

An acre of hops costs about £45, from first to last, to produce and pick. The capital sunk in hop land by the landlord would be about £2 or £3 per acre less than this sum.

Provided he could sell his hops fairly and quickly and had not too much foreign competition to meet, the English hop-grower could make his business pay and could plant more hops. But he must have a quick return for his money or only the men with large capital could keep to the business. It costs as much to cultivate 50 or 60 acres of hops as to farm 200 or 300 acres of arable land.

In comparison with arable farming, hop growing employs many more men and women, and the growing and gathering of a crop from a hop farm means a circulation of hundreds of pounds in the neighbourhood. If hop growing increases, the demand for labour would necessarily increase, and the locality would benefit accordingly.

State of Hop Growing.

Labour and Wages.

Causes of Change.

Foreign Competition.

Local Rates.

Annual Outgoings.

Conditions of Expansion.

Benefit to Labour.

MR. T. L. WALKER

(Farmer and Hop-grower, Knightwick Manor, Worcester).

I grow 132 acres of hops and also farm about 1,200 statute acres.

State of Hop Growing.

Four years ago everyone grew a record crop but for the past 3 seasons even the best cultivated hops have grown small crops. The 1904 crop, where well-washed, paid, but was the shortest crop since 1882; the 1903 crop did not pay, owing to foreign competition; the 1902 crop did not pay, and the 1901 crop was a loss, as owing to foreign competition good hops sold at from 30s. to £2 less than the cost of production. The 1905 crop of hops is most disastrous to a great many growers, as the present price, viz., 30s. to 40s. per cwt. is a dead loss to them and little more than half cost of production, as in many cases they did not pick a hop in 1904, and foreign competition has reduced 1904 hops from £10 to £2 per cwt. in the 12 months.

Labour and Wages.

We have sufficient labour by the importation of pickers from the Black Country, and the housing of this casual labour has much improved of late years, as has also the cottage accommodation for the regular labourers. Wages have increased in almost every branch.

Causes of Change.

Growers with new appliances for hop growing and drying have been able to grow larger crops at less expense than smaller growers and have increased their acreage while the small growers are dying out fast.

1090 **Railway Rates.**

Railway rates have been reduced a little of recent years, more especially where the companies have opposition.

Local Rates.

Local rates have decidedly increased under County Council management.

Capital Invested.

The landlord builds hop-kilns at great expense and keeps them in repair, and in many cases provides posts and wire for growing the hops. The annual interest on his capital thus invested would be from 30s. to £2 per acre. In addition it costs the tenant £80 per acre to plant and produce the first crop of hops in 2 years, including roots, wirework, stringing, manuring for 2 years, cultivating and labour, rent, rates and taxes for 2 years, washing, sulphuring, picking and drying.

Annual Outgoings.

I estimate the annual outgoings per acre on my farm as follows:—Rent and interest on necessary buildings, £4; labour, £20; manure, £8; machinery, £6; rates and taxes, 12s.

Duties.

I would suggest that there should be a duty of £2 per cwt. on imported hops, with compulsory marking and dating, and that the beer duty should be reduced by an equivalent amount. England could easily grow all the hops required by the brewers and the imposition of the duty and restrictions would enable us to put the necessary land under cultivation, and thus employ more labour and reduce the number of unemployed. About one-half the cost of the production of hops is labour charges, so that the labourer would benefit by one-half the £2 duty. If we grew all the hops required for the English market we should have to double the amount of labour now employed.

MR. W. COGGAN

(Meat Salesman, Clarendon House, Norwood Road, Herne Hill, S.E., Hon. Treas. Nat. Federation of Meat Traders' Associations).

I represent a large firm of dealers in meat, having retail shops in various parts of London and suburbs.

State of Trade.

The large amount of imported meat has so reduced the market value of all the inferior parts, of even the best animals, that it is a difficult matter to sell the prime parts sufficiently high to cover the loss. Profits have diminished—partly on account of the public having less money to spend, and partly through the keenness of competition—the lower qualities of imported meat being purchasable at so small a cost permits many with small capital to compete.

I consider the present condition of agriculture entirely due to the large supply of all farm produce from abroad.

As a member of the Royal Sanitary Institute, and also an Examiner of Meat Inspectors, I am acquainted with the general procedure in regard to tuberculosis in meat. The regulations to a certain extent interfere with the profitable production of meat, but as a rule the butcher suffers more severely than the producer.

Duties.

I am in favour of 5 % on dead meat, but only 2½ % on cattle, and am bound to say that I think it possible, and even probable, that a 5 % duty (equal to 2d. to 3d. per 8 lbs.) on the best imported meat may dislocate the trade, and probably divert it to other markets, but on all inferior meat I think a 5 % duty (equal to 1d. to 1½d. per 8 lbs.) would not affect the supply, and consequently not the consumer.

Maize should be admitted free, but bacon should be taxed.

MR. WILLIAM COOPER

(Meat Salesman, Smithfield).

I commenced business as dead meat salesman in 1866, first at the old market in Newgate, and afterwards at the Central Markets in Smithfield, where I carry on business at present. My trade is practically entirely in British produce, principally from Scotland, of which I am a native, and where I was a tenant-farmer under the Earl of Aberdeen for over 30 years. I can therefore also speak from experience as a tenant-farmer.

With respect to the production of meat, in Scotland my inquiries point to the fact that while there has been very little diminution in the number of cattle reared, the margin of profit has practically become an inexpressible quantity. This is directly resultant from the enormous competition of imported live and dead meat, the prices for which at such distributing centres as London, Birkenhead, Glasgow and Bristol really dominate the rates obtainable elsewhere. I am not aware that the high standard of Scotch beef and mutton has in any way deteriorated, for both still command the premier prices, but the cost of production is still as great, if not greater, than it was prior to the very serious competition of the high-class American chilled beef.

Regarding mutton, very much the same conditions prevail, but in addition it has to be noted that a serious decrease in the sheep of the country has contributed materially to the present high prices.

The effect of foreign competition is more directly felt, perhaps, in secondary and inferior grades of mutton by reason of the increasing number of frozen meat shops through which most towns are now supplied. I think that the great competition in beef at present arises chiefly from the dead meat, the reason being that dead meat is an article which must be sold at once, and very soon find its way into consumption, because it deteriorates. The methods of keeping it are very much better than they used to be. There are now enormous cold storage establishments which some years ago did not exist. Still, it is necessary to sell it for any price it will make. We observe particularly when we have a large supply of refrigerated beef from America that it affects prices for British produce more than live cattle in large numbers.

A short time ago we had a very great strike in Chicago amongst the packers' employes, and during that time we had shortened supplies of refrigerated beef from America. That had the effect of very much increasing the prices of home produce here, for although the supplies of live beef from America were considerably beyond the normal rate, the absence of the dead meat affected our prices far more. The increase in live beef arose from the fact that the packers in Chicago were not able to handle the dead meat, and therefore they got rid of their surplus stock to this country, alive. Of course, they cannot, if they would, send all live cattle, because the boat accommodation does not at all times permit. But in spite of that export of live cattle, prices were raised owing to the strike.

The American meat trade is carried on as follows. The five or six very large canners in America have practically the whole of the trade in their hands. They dominate the markets in the far West with their buyers. They purchase their cattle at such centres as Chicago, Kansas City, St. Louis, and other large places of the Western States, where they are reared and fed—the best cattle of the States. These cattle are then conveyed to Chicago, where a large portion of them is killed according to the requirements of the packers.

The packers do a very large business in the States in dead meat, supplying nearly all the larger towns, and exporting the surplus to this country, irrespective of the price it may fetch. They dump it down on us sometimes in enormous quantities, when we should imagine it would be unremunerative to do so; but there is not the least doubt that by getting rid of their surplus production they are enabled to appreciate the value of what they utilise at home.

The live cattle they send come from Chicago principally to New York, whence they are shipped to this country, to the foreign animals' wharves at Bristol, Southampton, Deptford, Liverpool, Hull and Glasgow. There they are allowed to remain alive ten days after landing before being slaughtered. The arrangements at these places for refrigeration and the facilities for the very best possible handling are, to use a common expression, "up to date." At the foreign animals' wharf at Deptford, a series of magnificent new buildings exist, erected at enormous expense, for lairages of the cattle; and further, they have a splendid system by which practically all the carcasses of the animals arriving can be refrigerated. When I say refrigeration, I do not mean refrigeration for the purpose of keeping them for any length of time, but simply so far as necessary for cooling the carcasses and getting them into a proper condition for market, not the refrigeration which is practised in Chicago; there they cool the meat down almost to the freezing point, and bring it over in large ships in refrigerating chambers. This is how America supplies us with its surplus cattle. When these cattle arrive at the American cities, such as Kansas, in the first instance, they are all fit for the butcher, that is, they are all fat and in splendid condition, they are splendid cattle. They are still in very good condition when they arrive at New York, and even after arrival at Deptford, and it would require an expert to say, on looking at the carcasses, that they have suffered much by their long and tiring journey. There is very little suffering indeed on the sea voyage. There is far more in a cross-Channel steamer from Dublin to Holyhead in one cargo of cattle than there would be in 20 cargoes coming from America. This is due to the character of the boat. The American boats are magnificent, and the cattle suffer very little.

The very best American beef is better than any second-class British. The best British (not forgetting Scotland, of course) is the best meat obtainable. Next come the cattle from the States—I mean absolutely the States cattle. Canadian cattle are not so good as States cattle, though they are approaching them. States cattle are younger bullocks as a rule than we should have them here, or quite as young. On the foreign animals' wharf at Deptford may often be seen a whole row of magnificent young Hereford cattle and frequently 200 to 400 black polled Scotch, all as like each other as two peas, and all coming 2 years old. They would have 2 teeth up. It used to be considered necessary for the best beef to be 3 years old. Now we get it 2 years old, and, I am sorry to say, some are even beginning to feed yearlings, so that the 2-year-old beef from the States has to compete to a large extent with 2-year-old beef here, and this is not remarkable. We have not in this country such a wide area to select from. We cannot grade our bullocks, or the beef, as they do there, and select it and send it to market in large absolutely uniform lots, as we have not the quantity to do it.

To produce the most perfect beef in the world I think 2 or 3 years would be quite old enough; but much depends on the animals and their treatment; as some come to maturity sooner than others, even of the same breed. Highland beasts are much slower in coming to maturity. They would require to be 3 or 4 years old. Highland beef is supposed to be the best. It is very good indeed, but I think it must not be judged altogether by the breed. Everything depends on the treatment of the animals in their earliest age.

Scotch Cattle.

1093

Mutton.

Effect of Foreign Competition.

Cold Storage.

Effect of Chicago Strike.

1094

American Meat Trade

Dumping.

Cattle Imports.

1095

Quality of American Beef.

1096

Best Beef.

1097 Forcing Cattle.

Some farmers now, particularly in Scotland, force their cattle from infancy—almost from the day they are calved, and of course those animals reach maturity much earlier than those which have been allowed to grow naturally. The sooner the animal can be brought to the market the better for the farmer.

Mutton Imports.

The importation of dead mutton is principally from the Colonies and Argentina. Dead mutton from the Continent of America is almost a negligible quantity.

We get considerable numbers of live sheep from Canada, and also from the States, and some of the Canadian sheep have very much improved of recent years. The States do not produce such good mutton as beef, and the Canadian mutton is better than that from the States; at present it approaches very nearly some of the mutton in this country, and I think its export is likely to become a growing trade in Canada.

Other imported mutton comes in the greatest quantities from New Zealand (it used to come from Australia, but they have had a bad time), the Argentine, and the River Plate.

N.Z. Lamb.

In New Zealand, the best grass lamb—the early lamb there—is quite as good as, if not better than, anything we can produce in this country, and the early lamb fetches sometimes a very good price in our markets.

Effect of Freezing.

I think myself that one of the principal causes of deterioration is that the freezing destroys all the cells which contain the juices of the meat. If a frozen leg of mutton, when cooked, is cut right through, the whole of the juice or gravy runs into the dish, and very little indeed, if any, is left in the meat. Like a frozen water pipe, it is not able to retain the very thing that gives the meat the flavour and taste.

1098

I believe it is a fact that English butchers have always been very careful to keep their shops warm in frosty weather, feeling and knowing that their meat would be damaged if it were frozen. Mutton which has been frozen has deteriorated greatly.

If a piece of Scotch beef and a piece of English beef are put into a refrigerator and kept there refrigerated—frozen for some time—on taking them out I do not think that any person could tell whether they had come from Australia or New Zealand or elsewhere. I think the freezing process would have much the same effect, whatever the origin of the meat. I am of opinion that all things frozen are deteriorated, and even the market price falls, but mutton must be frozen to cross the Equator. Frozen mutton first came here successfully, I think, in 1881.

Percentage of Imports.

From the tables supplied to me by the Town Clerk of London, the proportion of Colonial and Foreign to English appears to be 70 per cent. of the whole supply of meat, as far as the importation into London is concerned.

Duties on Live and Dead Meat.

I am of opinion that there would be some hardship in having the same duty of 5 per cent. on the dead and on the live meat, for 5 per cent., assuming the value as returned at the Customs, would produce 18s. 10d. per head, while a carcase, say, of 90 stones would only pay 13s. That is not as it should be. It has been estimated that in 1903 "Cattle and sheep from the U.S.A. and Argentina, on the values as returned to the Customs, would have contributed £313,965, equal to about 17s. 9d. per head on cattle and 1s. 6d. on sheep. On beef, mutton and pork from the U.S.A., Holland, Belgium, and other countries, a sum amounting to £641,756 would have been levied, or about 2s. per cwt. all round."—(*Meat Trades Journal*, 14th January, 1904.) I would base the specific duty on the estimated value, which is, I believe, given to the Customs, and is declared by an agent employed by the insuring firm and the owners.

1099

I am not sure that the value of the smaller animals would not be equal to or more than that of the larger, because ranch cattle are generally larger and older than stall-fed cattle; but although larger, they would not be of more value. I do not object to taking the value of the cattle, but I think it would be unfair that live animals should be charged more than the corresponding carcase, because when the live animal comes into this country there is the hide, offal, horns, and other things, which brings it into the category of raw material, and would give a good deal of employment; but I do not think it would much affect the man who sends it here.

I should myself very much prefer a duty on live animals of so much per head, and 5 per cent. on the dead meat. I think by that means it would be very easy to equalise the duties so that the one did not pay any more than the other.

Effect on Imports.

The Yankee shippers are very smart, and look at the least thing that would be to their advantage, and if we were to charge them equally, I am sure they would slaughter most of their cattle in America, and send us over only the carcasses, and the dead meat trade would practically take the place of the live meat altogether.

Effect on Prices.

1100

I do not think that the duty of 5 per cent. on imported meat or imported cattle would affect the price of meat one iota, no more than 2s. or 3s. a quarter on corn would affect the price of wheat. I am decidedly in favour of 1s. registration duty on all corn, and I am also in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's 2s. per quarter on corn beyond that, with a preference to the Colonies.

American Agencies.

The foreigners dominate the market to the extent of something like 70 per cent. All the large houses in Chicago, or most of them, have premises in the Central Market, and also big stores all round London, at Eastbourne, Brighton, Margate, Ramsgate, Hastings, and all the Southern towns, and get a through rate by the railway from Liverpool, so that they can deliver the beef at these southern towns at the very same rate as in London.

Through Rates.

The Americans would look on the rates to these Southern towns as "through" rates from New York, and it is very doubtful whether the railways would give the same facilities to the home producer, generally not. A very small rate is charged to shippers from Liverpool to London, on quantities, say 3-ton lots or truck-loads; but when the consigners of meat from Aberdeen or thereabout ask for this rate it is refused. They can obtain nothing but the ordinary rate, which is 70s. from Aberdeen (whereas the rate from Liverpool is only 25s.), which is excessive, and a great injustice to the home producer, especially as there is sufficient meat for a special train, which leaves Aberdeen every lawful day except Friday, and runs right through to London. The quantity is so considerable that sometimes it cannot all be taken by one train. Three railway companies are concerned. A special train is made up from Aberdeen, some of the meat having come from beyond, so that there is no excuse for saying it comes in dribblets.

English Railway Rates.

As to the possibilities of the expansion of the home supply of meat in London, unless I knew the capital that the agriculturalist possessed, and what he was prepared to spend on the rearing of beef and mutton, I could not tell what the production of the country would be. One farmer might produce half as many bullocks again as another with the same acreage.

The more roots and the like produced, the greater the amount of fat stock that can be raised, and it would appear that the maximum is to be obtained from the 6-shift rotation, i.e., 3 grass, 2 arable, and 1 root crop.

As to the marking of meat, I am no believer in the Merchandise Marks Act. If anything is to be marked, let it be our own goods and not the foreigners'. The marking of foreign goods merely advertises them.

I do not think that the practice of selling foreign meat as English prevails largely with the retailer. Nowadays there are very few people who are really judges of good meat. If it is tender, that is all they care about.

My experience with maize as a foodstuff for cattle is that there never was a pound of best meat made by it, and never will be. It would be a very great mistake to exempt maize and tax barley and other things which are better foodstuffs than maize.

I think it is hardly perhaps known in this country that the value of the imported bacon is more than the value of the imported meat. In the first ten months of this year fresh meat was imported to the value of £6,574,000, but the bacon imported principally from Denmark, the United States and Canada, was valued at £10,666,000. This very large importation must reduce the price of high-class bacon within the United Kingdom. It is impossible to say to what extent. It is all a question of demand and supply, and while there is no bacon equal to the bacon of this country, that of some others is most excellent, Denmark for one. I much prefer Danish bacon to American. One of the American ways of feeding is to turn so many bullocks into a pound or a yard and so many pigs. The bullocks are fed and the pigs feed themselves. The food is on the husk, a good deal is dropped, and the pigs pick it up. Denmark is becoming one of the largest bacon exporting countries, and Denmark, where, owing to climatic conditions, the cattle and pigs must be housed so many months in the year, suffers, and must suffer considerably, from tuberculosis. The British farmer at the present moment is suffering most seriously from the condemnation of his fresh pork found to be in the incipient stages of tuberculosis. In the Central Markets it is no unusual thing to see many carcasses of well-nourished fat pigs seized and condemned because they have an enlargement of the thyroid gland (under the order of the Local Government Board, which is based on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, that where there is the least evidence of disease in a pig the whole carcass is to be condemned). This is a very serious thing indeed for the farmer and breeder. Particularly is it hard on him with reference to a country like Denmark, that exports no fresh pork, but an enormous quantity of bacon instead. There are hundreds of these pigs condemned on coming to London as fresh pork, which if made into bacon would have the whole evidence of tuberculosis removed. The British farmer is thus seriously penalised, and I do hope that Mr. Chamberlain will not exempt bacon. Bacon factories have been started in East Anglia and other places, but they did not succeed on account of the enormous competition of Danish and other bacon. I ground my objection to the exemption of bacon from a duty partly on the ground of health—tuberculosis, &c.—but chiefly that it is sent into this country at prices which will not pay the British farmer.

WITNESS No. 228.

MR. J. MITCHELL HARRIS

(Chilvester Lodge, Calne, Wilts; Managing Director of Charles and Thomas Harris & Co., Ltd., Bacon Curers, Calne, and of the West of England Bacon Co., Ltd., Redruth, Cornwall).

We are the oldest and largest Wiltshire bacon and ham curers. We supply home, colonial and foreign markets, chiefly home. Our home trade has steadily increased for years. Tariffs have prevented any volume of foreign trade. In the Colonies, with nominal or no tariffs, we do a large and increasing trade, but we cannot do so where prohibitive tariffs exist, as in Australia. British trade is restricted or stopped by the following tariffs on bacon and hams:—France 12s. per cwt., Germany 10s., America 23s. 4d., Australia 28s. Most drastic declarations must be made as to origin, whether goods contain preservatives, &c., and before shipping goods to America we must swear before the Consul that there is no preservative other than salt or sugar. America and the Continent compete with us in Colonial markets. American bacon competes with us here also, but the tariff wall keeps us out of the States. We have suffered more heavily than any other industry from foreign competition. The startling increase in imports of bacon, hams, and fresh and salt pork is borne out by the following figures:—

IMPORTS IN HUNDREDWEIGHTS.

	Bacon.	Hams.	Fresh Pork.	Salted Pork.
1866-1870.. .. .	579,518	44,158	20,157	170,477
1876-1880.. .. .	3,420,505	689,391	24,038	360,368
1886-1890.. .. .	3,285,519	957,835	127,785	266,782
1891-1895.. .. .	3,668,699	1,144,033	182,131	217,448
1896-1900.. .. .	5,342,319	1,787,776	513,799	260,394
1901-1903.. .. .	5,339,680	1,494,763	714,243	229,960

1105 State of Trade
—continued.

The twelve-fold increase in imported meats has been very detrimental to our curing trade. These inroads by foreigners are not due to lack of British enterprise but to tariffs abroad. Practically the entire products of such countries as Denmark come here. French, German, Russian and American tariffs prohibit almost all business. Only 8.6 % of the £19,038,000 worth of bacon, hams and pork imported into England in 1893 came from British possessions. In 1903 12.1 % was Colonial and 88 % foreign; in 1861-65 the average consumption per head was 4.2 lbs. of foreign, it is now 19.8 lbs. Bacon is not "the staple food for many of the poorest of the population," it is only 18.9 % of the meat of workmen's families (see Blue Book, pages 210-213). Maize is enormously imported for feeding horses and pigs. It is bad for both. Maize was the poor people's food in Ireland before the famine, but now it is almost entirely confined to feeding animals and distilling. It is a bad food for hogs, and we refuse to buy hogs fed on it. Pigs fed on maize meal are almost certain to produce soft and bad quality bacon. I was Chairman of the Wilts. County Council Committee whose 4 years' experiments in pig feeding with every variety of food confirmed this view of maize. All other authoritative tests agree. When used in conjunction with counteracting foods it is more satisfactory. 3 parts of peas and 1 part maize will make a good pig food, but barley is better and cheaper than peas.

Profits.

Net profits have materially decreased owing to lower prices obtainable for pig offals, to the inferior foreign bacon palmed off as British, and to expensive advertising necessary to warn against the latter. (The Merchandise Marks Act is generally evaded.) Lard and pig offals have become less remunerative without increasing in volume.

1106 Labour.

Employment in recent years has been normal. Agricultural labourers in 1861 represented 5½ %, in 1900 only 2½ % of population which had increased 40 %.

Wages.

Wages have not materially increased, but shorter hours prevail.

**Railway and
Shipping Rates.**

Transport rates for bacon, &c., bear more heavily on us than on our importing competitors, as will be seen by the following tables:—

FREIGHTS FROM DENMARK.

	Danish Railways.	Esbjerg to London.	Total.	Danish Mileage.	Sea Mileage.	English Mileage.	Total.
Aalborg	10/-	20/3	30/3	210	350	70	630
Silkeborg	6/-	20/3	26/3	87	350	70	507
Odense	6/6	20/3	26/9	94	350	70	514
Thirsted	8/3	20/3	28/6	143	350	70	563
Nestved	8/10	20/3	29/1	175	350	70	595
Viborg	7/9	20/3	28/-	141	350	70	561

1107**FREIGHTS FROM IRELAND.**

	Irish Mileage.	Sea Mileage.	English Mileage.	Total.
Waterford	28/4	—	220	338
Limerick	34/2	70	220	408
Cork	30/-	—	264	382

INLAND CANADIAN AND AMERICAN RATES.

	Per 100 lbs.	Per ton.
	cents.	£ s. d.
Brantford (Ontario) to New York	22	1 0 6
Brantford (Ontario) to Montreal	22	1 0 6
Brantford (Ontario) to West St. John	23½	1 2 0
Hull (Quebec) to Montreal	12	0 11 2
Hull (Quebec) to West St. John	17	0 15 10
Ottawa to Portland (Maine)	17	0 15 10
Ottawa to Boston	17	0 15 10
Peterboro' to Montreal	12	0 11 2
Peterboro' to New York	22	1 0 6
Peterboro' to Portland (Maine)	22	1 0 6

1108**RATES PER TON TO ENGLAND.**

	Cheese.	Butter.
Montreal and London	34/6	45/-
New York and London	30/9	—
Boston and London	20/-	25/-
Montreal and Manchester	20/-	40/-

Bacon rate per ton to London—13s. 1d. from Boston, 42s. 6d. from Chicago (including 1,000 miles by rail), 28s. 6d. from Thirsted (Denmark), (including 213 miles land carriage), 28s. 11d. from Ottawa (Canada), 14s. 2d. from New York, New York to Liverpool, 5s. 3d., to Cape Town, 15s. With these compare our rates:—Calne to London (99½ miles) 27s. 11d. (20s. for 4-ton lots), Calne to Aberdeen (steamer from London) 45s. We pay 31s. 3d. to Cape Town, 700 miles less than from New York.

The number of home pigs has not increased, although every foreign country and colony contains more every year. This is attributable to the methods in agriculture fostered by other Governments. Denmark, Canada and America are always experimenting for the benefit of agriculturists; the best pedigree animals in the world are purchased by the State for stock purposes, and farmers are educated in cultivation, breeding and rearing. All this is left to private enterprise here. My firm have spent hundreds of pounds in the free distribution of pedigree boars among our feeders and in numerous experiments in foods to improve the quality of hogs. Our Irish competitors have done the same. The Board of Agriculture should investigate the increasing supplies of foreign hog products. When a Bill likely to benefit the farmer is introduced into Parliament it is construed as attempting to endow the rural population at the expense of the urban. Our processes of manufacture are as good as any foreign ones, although their business is often on a vaster scale. To encourage pig-raising, Colonies offer tempting terms to experienced packers. A large Canadian town recently offered 3 acres for 90 years at a dollar per annum, exempt from all rates and taxes for 30 years, and the Natal Government offered £500 per annum for 3 years, for the establishment of a large packing house in each case.

Foreign and
Colonial Methods.

Legislation is necessary to foster small holdings, of which there are 20,000 less than 1885, and 8,000 less than 1895. In Wiltshire there is a substantial increase in holdings of 50 to 300 acres. This class of farmer cultivates his land better and raises more hogs than the larger agriculturist. In 1888 at Rew Farm, Dorsetshire, 343 acres were sold in 80 lots, and all taken up—the population of the farm was 21; in 1902 the population was 100 and the rateable value had risen 60 %. Parliament should assist English agriculturists by advancing money towards the purchase of small holdings with good security, where buyer and seller wish it. Such holders work harder for themselves than if in a farmer's employ. In Ireland it has been tried a little and holders are glad they can buy their holding. Houses having to be built on these small holdings is the great difficulty. Small holdings (10 to 50 acres), would bring many people back to the land. A man and his family could live very well on 25 to 50 acres. Land could be turned to fruit growing, market gardening, and butter and cheese making. Some land in Wiltshire would be impossible to farm by small farmers, but small proprietorship could be extended to a very large degree as in Denmark, Holland and Ireland.

Small Holdings.

Rates have advanced 30 % since 1900, and 35 % since 1896.

Local Rates.

Foreign technical education does not produce superior workmen; ours are more intelligent. Chicago packing houses collect inferior labour from every country.

Education.

Labour 3 %, the hog 67 %, fixed charges and material used in manufacture 30 %.

Annual Outgoings.

On reading Mr. Chamberlain's Glasgow speech literally, I at once recognised that his proposals, if carried out, would be most disastrous to the particular industry in which I am engaged, however advantageous they might be to the country at large; I mean the taxation of fresh pork and barley, and the free importation of bacon and maize, on the ground that the latter form the "staple food for many of the poorest of the population." I felt convinced, however, that Mr. Chamberlain had been misinformed on those points, and as the result of private representations made, he wrote on October 16th, 1903:—"My statement as to the taxes I propose to impose was only a broad outline, and I have always maintained that nothing can finally be settled until all the representatives of the trades concerned have been fully heard. If, therefore, their view of the situation is confirmed I should have to meet it as they suggest, either by taxing bacon as well as other meat, or by relieving barley; most likely by the former." Many English and Irish bacon curers were, almost in self defence, dealing in foreign as well as British bacon and were thus unable to act in a totally disinterested manner, whilst my own companies have never handled any bacon except that killed and cured in our own factories. So when invited to join the Commission I decided that though temporarily opposed to some of Mr. Chamberlain's published proposals, there would be nothing inconsistent in accepting the invitation, seeing that on broad lines I was in sympathy with Fiscal Reform.

Duties.

WITNESS No. 229.

MR. JAMES HUDSON

(Provision Merchant, Hudson Bros., Ltd., 50 & 52, Ludgate Hill, London).

I wish to speak from a retail point of view. Although we are wholesale to a great extent, still retailing is the principal part of our business. We deal direct with the consumer. I am in a very good position to answer questions relating to bacon, hams, butter, cheese and eggs.

I trade in Canadian and American hog products. The increase of butter from the Colonies and from Argentina during the last few years has been enormous. From January to October, 1904, the quantity of butter from Denmark was 1,628,126 cwt., the value £8,954,693. The importation of butter from Siberia from May to October, 1904, was 521,708 cwt., of a value of £2,608,540. The butter has only come as Siberian or Russian butter for the last 8 or 10 years. It used to come in much smaller quantities before, through Denmark and Sweden, and was sent here as Danish and Swedish. Now it comes on its own merits. They are becoming a dairying people in Siberia. The Russian Government took the matter up. They sent a deputation over here some 8 or 9 years ago to see what would be the best methods of packing butter and sending it, and who they should send it to. I have averaged the price here for Siberian butters at £4 10s. per cwt., that

Import Trade.

Siberian Butter.

1113 **Siberian Butter**
continued.

would be about 9d. per lb. Some would fetch more and some less. It comes here from about April till the end of October. Some of the Siberian butter is exceedingly good. It is not a high-class butter, but it is a very useful butter for the poorer classes. It can be sold at 10d., 11d. and 1s. per lb. retail.

American Bacon.

Siberian ham does not compare even with American hams. Although most American bacon is so very indifferent that good houses never touch it, yet some brands of hams are exceedingly good. There is a much greater amount of lean to the ham. It is the fat of the American bacon that is so indifferent, and spoils the whole of the ham. When the body of the ham is lean, and there is not so much fat, it really forms a very good article of daily consumption, and makes a very fair price. The American and all the commoner kinds of bacon go into the poorer neighbourhoods of the large cities and towns. It does not go into really good districts. These get the best of the English, the Irish, and the Danish, which is exceedingly good bacon, the Canadian bacon comes next.

Effect of Imports.

Imports from Australia and New Zealand, from the retail point of view, have been beneficial in keeping prices low. In the past butter was 6d. to 8d. per lb. dearer in winter than in summer; it now remains the same price all the year round, which is a great saving to the British public. During 6 months of the year of late years they have saved from 6d. to 8d. per lb.

Profits.

Competition is so keen that profits have diminished very considerably. In years past, when prices were moderate, profits were better, but this has been altered entirely through the severe competition. All branches of our trade have become less profitable. It does not matter what it is, whether bacon, hams, cheese, butter or lard. That is good for the consumer. The public generally were never in a better position. They are so splendidly catered for and prices so much less than they used to be in the old times. There has been no less business done—considerably more.

1114

Effect of Trusts.

The result of amalgamations and syndicates has stimulated competition and lowered prices; one puts down its prices against another.

Duties.

There should not be any duty on maize or other food stuff. A tax of 5% on foreign pork, bacon, hams, etc., would not advance the price to the consumer in the least; 5% would be about ½d. per lb. on bacon and hams, and ½d. to ¾d. on butter. This duty would be paid entirely by the foreigner. The opposition contend that if a duty is put upon anything the consumer must suffer. I differ with that. If a small duty like 5% is placed upon most of the things in which we deal it would not make a penny difference. The foreign produce has to compete in our markets with our own and the Colonial products, and it fetches its value according to its quality. The agent who sells would return a cheque minus his commission and the duty. Surely this amount must come out of the pocket of the shippers and not out of the public pocket. I should not advocate a much larger duty than 5% because that might interfere with imports, but a duty of 5% would not diminish the supply. Ours is the only market for bacon and hams and butter in such quantities. A 5% duty would have a beneficial effect upon prices in the home market; it would be helpful in securing greater continuity and security in the home trade; it would promote economy of production, would develop the British industry of rearing and fattening pigs and would increase employment. It would not lessen either the supply or demand. It would not have any effect upon imports or upon my trade if fresh pork were taxed and bacon admitted free. The duty would not tend to the substitution of Colonial for foreign imports. Colonial imports would undoubtedly increase, and though they entered free of duty it would not deter the foreigner from continuing to use our markets. The supply would be the same. Preference to the Colonies might injure our home producer by increasing the Colonial production and the supply in our markets.

Effect Generally.

1115

Effect on Imports.

Bacon is not the staple food of our poorer classes. Frozen beef and mutton is much cheaper and more used than ever by them. The inferior parts of our best beef and mutton are sold at 3d. and 4d. a lb. Before frozen meat came into the country those parts made 6d. and 8d.

Bacon.

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Maize.

Maize is not a suitable food for pigs. Pigs fed on maize become soft and oily. The American pig is fed chiefly upon maize, and is the worst description of bacon that comes into this country, and fetches the lowest price. I know by experience that barley-meal is the best food for pigs. I would admit maize free because I do not think any food for feeding purposes should be taxed, not even if it is a bad one. Maize is not a good food for horses. A large quantity of maize is used for distilling and also for brewing and for making glucose, which is used for various purposes where fermentations take place. If maize were admitted free and barley taxed the quality of the pig would be considerably lowered. Maize would be used instead of barley-meal, and the English pig would deteriorate at once. If they had to pay a high price for taxed barley and could get maize without any tax upon it we would not get the quantity of good pigs we do at present. If barley-meal were cheaper they would not use maize, but they *will* feed on the cheapest article. In feeding pigs the fact of being able to give them a small quantity of milk is of great service. It really brings a pig ready for the butcher 6 weeks or 2 months before it would be ready if not fed with skimmed milk.

1116

Preference.

It would be better for the Colonial shipper if he had a preference given him.

Fraudulent Trading.

Misrepresentation is used occasionally, but not to any great extent. I am speaking of London and the Home Counties. My experience does not go to the North of England. There may be more misrepresentation there. The lower classes of the Canadian bacon and American bacon are more freely sold in the North of England than with us in the South.

Prices.

The English and Irish are the highest standards of bacon on our market. The average of Danish bacon is 2s. to 4s. less than English or Irish, and Canadian is less by 6s. to 8s. per cwt. That is about the general difference in the price.

Lard.

A duty of 5% on lard is quite enough. Lard is a very useful article for the poorer classes, and it is sold very cheaply. The most astonishing feature in the matter of lard is that houses which are large consumers get into the habit of having the American pail lard. It is a nice pail, and the chefs like it because it is easier to get at than a bladder of lard. It is a very useful article in that way, but the quality of American lard is not to be compared with English, and yet they buy it at nearly the same price. This is in a great measure the

fault of the chefs. For the pail they get 4d. as a perquisite, and they will have this lard. I sent to one of our large consumers, who uses 20 or 30 pails of this lard per week, a barrel of Denny's lard. I said:—"I have sent you this lard as I am out of pails for a few days, and I will charge you the same price as I have been charging you for pails. You will find the quality of it at least 10s. or 15s. per cwt. better, and it will go further." They sent back word that they were much obliged to me; that they knew that bladder lard of the best quality was much better than pails of American lard, and would I go on sending the same until further notice. We had notice in 3 or 4 days that they preferred the pails. That was done by the chef. The chefs like the pails and not the best bladdered lard.

The Canadian Cheddar has displaced the whole of the American cheese. Thirty or 40 years ago we had little or no Canadian, and the American cheese was our cheapest cheese, but gradually the Canadian, because it is better, has pushed the American cheese out of the market; or else it is that the Americans now consume their own, and do not care to send it to us. The quantity of cheese sent from Canada is enormous and increasing, and a first-rate article it is—far better than third-rate English cheese. It is only the finest of the English cheese that comes really to the front. Before the cattle plague in 1864 Cheshire cheese was the staple cheese of England. Afterwards they fed off their grass with sheep, and it so poisoned the grass that the cheese sent from Cheshire was bad and ill-flavoured, and it has never recovered its position in this market till just lately. During the last 12 months we have sold at least 5 or 6 times more per week than we did a few years ago. It has re-established itself.

Canadian Cheese.

Cheshire Cheese.

WITNESS No. 230.

MR. SAMUEL J. McCARTNEY, J.P.,

(Ben-Vista, Ballymena, Sole Partner in the firm of David McCartney & Son, Ham and Bacon Curers, Ballymena).

I can give evidence on the Irish curing trade, and those branches of agriculture bearing on the curing trade in Ulster—hog feeding, and the growing of feeding stuffs for hogs. I do not deal in foreign products, only in Irish hog products.

I have been curing bacon for the past 35 years, and during that time we have had considerable fluctuations in price, and also in the quantity of pork. If foreign meats are dear, more is raised in our own country and if feeding stuffs are cheap, more pork is bred because it is more profitable to farmers. Foreign pork is a considerable competitor against home pork. The United States compete at very low prices, Canada and Denmark compete pretty largely; some years ago we had a little from Germany, but that has disappeared. There is a little just now from Russia, but the United States is our greatest competitor. Owing to this competition pig feeding has become less remunerative. The farmers cannot get sufficient prices for their pigs. It also affects the curer, as we have not so much to handle. Our turnover has become smaller, and our profits have diminished. We can always find a market, but the difficulty is to get remunerative prices. The British market has been steady, but the market with France has declined considerably, and with America and other countries, excepting the Colonies, is almost nil. The falling off in our exports to France is due to the lower prices of Canadian and Danish bacon, not to increased production in France. We are on the same basis as our Danish competitors, but Denmark is turning out a good deal more than they have done. Their prices are considerably lower, but the quality is not equal to ours. Bacon can be grown in Denmark more cheaply than in Ireland, as they get barley very cheaply from the Black sea. We cannot grow barley in Ireland with any profit. The Irish curing trade is divided into three sections, the bacon, the ham, and the coarse meat or offal, and if the business is to be remunerative, when bacon is abnormally low, the hams and offal must be relatively higher to bring out cost and profit, or *vice versa*. If all are abnormally low through foreign competition, then lower prices must be given for the pigs, which affects the pig raiser.

State of Trade.

Employment in the bacon-curing trade in Ireland during recent years has increased. Wages are from 10 to 20 % better. Our chief men get 35s. to 40s., our average workmen from 18s. to 22s. for ordinary knife men, and down as low as 10s. for the boys, fellows of 15 and so on. The men are improving in skill. More hands are now employed for turning out the same amount. It is better handled, more care is taken, and more expense put on it. We are turning out a better quality more carefully packed than formerly.

Labour and Wages.

I could not suggest any improvement in regard to market organisation. The pigs are killed at the farm-houses; they are dressed and hung up over night, and brought into our markets the following morning. Then the buyers from the various curing houses purchase them by private bargain.

Market Organisation. 1120

We are severely handicapped by the excessive railway rates. We can bring in American bacon from New York to Liverpool for 5s. per ton, but if we send our bacon from Liverpool to New York it would cost us 15s. and 10 % more by mail steamer. Our freight on bacon is 15s. from Ballymena to Liverpool, through rate. We are 33 miles inland. The railway and the cartage take about 7s. 6d. From Copenhagen to Leith, and Leith to Glasgow, 680 miles by sea and about 55 miles by rail, the freight is 20s. 3d., that is 5s. 3d. more than it costs us to send from Ballymena to Liverpool which is a much shorter distance. If we were sending from Ballymena to Copenhagen it would cost us 41s. From Copenhagen *via* Hull to Manchester is 28s. 6d. From Limerick to Manchester is 37s. 6d. From Ballymena to Reading the rate is 55s. 10d. by L. & N.W. Railway. From Ballymena to Tipperary is 47s. 4d.

Railway Rates and Freights.

Canadian bacon comes into competition with ours, but is not so good. I classify it thus:—United States bacon is the lowest class and the cheapest, then would come Canadian, then Danish, and then Irish—some might say Wiltshire. The present price of three-quarter sides dried American (United States) would be about 49s. in London; Canadian, 56s.; Danish, 63s.; and Irish, 70s. United States hams, 50s.; Canadian, 58s. Danish I cannot give you because it is usually cured in the Wiltshire style; then Irish, 90s. to 100s.

Quality and Price.

1121 Foreign Advantages.

In the United States labour would cost more than in Ireland, but they handle so much more and have considerable labour-saving appliances so that it would about balance. In Ireland we are fairly supplied with salt. We have salt mines on the east coast of Carrickfergus, about 29 miles from Ballymena and 10 miles from Belfast, and from those mines we can get salt cheaply. Denmark and Germany have about equal advantages in salt extracted from the sea water and obtainable in Sicily. Denmark would possibly have labour somewhat cheaper, but not very much. The higher technical training for workmen on the Continent and in America tends to produce better labour and more economy in the handling of meats than here. Technical education is a good thing and where adapted to the pursuit in life ought to be a great advantage in any industry. It makes the workman more skilful and economical in the use of materials. We are considerably behind in that.

Proportion of Cost.

Labour, that is workmen's wages, commission, &c., amount to 3.50 %. This would be nearly the same as foreign and Colonial. Hogs and materials that is salt and saltpetre, casks, packing, &c., 89.50 %; and fixed charges, including interest on capital, 1.75 %; incidental expenses and profit, 5.25 %, would make the balance.

Trusts.

The effect of trusts and kartells, &c., is to hold the market generally and so advance prices or to rush them down, and perhaps squeeze out smaller competitors. I do not know any trusts in Denmark. There have been such in the United States. Sometimes they have had the effect of sending over enormous quantities of stuff here which has pressed down our market unnecessarily. Sometimes they have held it back and thus rushed up the price, then by and by the surplus will come over again.

1122 Training of Travellers.

The American traveller is pretty much like our own, but has more talk. The Continental traveller is very much ahead of ours. He acquires languages more easily, and is more regularly taught. If a traveller comes over here, instead of quoting in kilos, francs, or thalers, he will quote us exactly in cwts., quarters, and lbs., and £ s. d.; our men going over there would, as a rule, only have the one way of quoting. We do not require commercial travellers with any knowledge outside English because we have only an English market. Eighteen or 20 years ago Handelschulen (commercial schools) were established on the Continent. These have been very advantageous. In these schools and in the night schools, where the young people are going in for commerce, instead of giving them an academic training they will bring in for instance a banker to lecture upon money exchanges, an official from the railway to instruct upon railway matters and transport, a judge on commercial law, a Customs officer on tariffs, and so forth on all matters connected with business life.

Closed Markets.

As an instance of a market of which we previously enjoyed the use and which has been lost through the operation of tariffs you might take Brazil. Many years ago a very fair trade was done. That market has been practically closed to us. Possibly not more than twice were we able to ship goods to Newfoundland, and never to the United States. The United States tariff is £1 3s. 4d. and to Brazil it is higher. British hog products were exported to Australia once or twice some years ago. The tariff there is about 20s.

Dumping.

The British policy of free imports enables the foreigner to increase the volume of his business, and so reduce the cost of production. After supplying his own market at moderately fair rates, he can dump the surplus in this market at such a price as really cannot be met without loss. Cheapness of production depends upon the extent of production. We could employ a great many more men if we had bigger markets, that is, a larger supply of pork.

1123

Duties.

It would be to our interest as manufacturers that there should be judiciously-imposed tariffs, and possibly it would be an advantage to the country generally. If there were a duty upon bacon at all it should be very small as it is the food of the poorer classes. I would not like to exclude them from the benefits. On fresh pork, however, I should be inclined to impose a considerable tariff as it is often brought over and cured here, and sold here as British, very much to the detriment of the trade in this country. I am aware of the enormous quantity of fresh pork that comes to London from Holland by way of the East coast. That is possibly all consumed fresh. Bacon is the food of the poor as much to-day as it was 20 years ago. American bacon would be cheaper as a food than mutton. I know it is very much cheaper with us. Mutton would be about 8d. or 9d. per pound, and with a considerable proportion of bone, and American bacon would not be more than about 5d. a lb. The tax I should recommend on bacon and hams would be not more than ½d. per lb. or 4s. per cwt. I do not think a small duty on Danish bacon would stop any coming in. Now and again we have a strong competition from Denmark, at other times it falls out pretty much. But all over there is a great increase.

Maize.

I would not recommend any tax on maize. In very poor districts ground maize as Indian meal or Indian flour is a wholesale food for poor people and very cheap. Porridge is made of it instead of the Scotch oat.

1124

Lard.

Oats or barley meal produces hog meat with a greater proportion of lean and firmer fat, and is therefore more desirable than maize. However if maize is mixed with skim milk, or better still cooked with milk and potatoes, which is generally done in Ireland, the result is very satisfactory. Barley is not largely used in Ireland for feeding. Maize is more of a fatty food and less albuminous, and the skim milk along with the potatoes brings it up to the proper food. I would impose a considerably larger duty on American lard than upon bacon. It is flooded in here and often sold as Irish, and possibly as English lard. The effect of these duties would be to develop British industry. It would be an encouragement to rear more pigs, and would give employment in a great many ways.

Fraudulent Dealing.

No doubt there is hardly any industry in which there has been so much fraudulent dealing as the bacon trade. American rolled bacon is marked "Prime Ballymena" or "Best Belfast." Two or three years ago a large and well-known firm in London were caught selling American hams which had been smoked and faked as Irish, and substantial fines were imposed. In my view the appointment of Government inspectors is necessary to prevent fraud upon the British cured bacon. Let the articles be sold for what they are, and if the foreigner makes a better article we shall have to submit to it.

Farming in Ulster.

I have obtained from the Agricultural Department the returns with reference to wheat growing in Ulster. In 1860 the acreage under wheat was 86,798; in 1870, 66,250; in 1880, 38,827; in 1890, 25,095; in 1900, 17,535; and in 1903-4, 8,430. That is a diminution since 1860 of 78,368 acres. Oats have decreased 38 % from 1860 and flax, 64 ½ %. Flax is an important industry with us. The decrease in wheat is a great loss to

our curing trade and to Ulster generally. I recollect when there were 30 or 35 mills in the 3 counties of Antrim, Down and Derry, employing a large number of hands in addition to the labourers who were farming wheat. The labourers have left the country and drifted into the towns or to other countries, and the engineers and sack-makers and all in connection with the mills have disappeared, and of those mills not more than 9 or 10 are in existence. This is a great loss to Ulster. We should have had more offal for feeding, and, taking the labour into consideration, it has been a serious matter to us. A small import duty upon wheat and flour might have kept a good deal of that in the country. I would like to see a bigger duty upon flour than upon wheat with the object of getting offals, so that we would have more feeding stuffs available, and also with the object of bringing back the employment to the milling industry.

Duties on Wheat and Flour.

For some years most of our Colonies will require all bacon and hams they can raise. If however they in future should become exporters, on Imperial grounds I should admit their products free.

Preference.

WITNESS No. 231.

MR. ALFRED MARSH

(Ham and Bacon Curer, High Street, Brierley Hill, Staffordshire).

I propose to give evidence on the feeding and curing of bacon. I do trade to a small extent in American (United States), meat, but it is only in a small retail way.

Our retail trade has decreased considerably within the last 3 years owing to the local state of trade being bad, but our trade in the United Kingdom, other than London, has rather improved owing to our goods becoming better known. The London trade has not improved. Our trade has been very considerably affected by imports, more especially of our own speciality, dry hams. One firm is doing about 6,000 American hams per week, practically the whole of which has supplanted English products. Danish bacon has affected our trade considerably. The Danish killings are about 34,000 pigs per week, and 90 % or 95 % of that comes into London. That means 60,000 to 70,000 hams per week to be disposed of. The net profits are not smaller, but we have found that the small butchers are very heavily handicapped, some of their goods, where they have not proper appliances, being sold at practically the same prices as American goods. We have found the competition in home trade very severe, especially in the summer trade in London. In the summer a large quantity of ham is sold by the ham and beef shops. The American has monopolised that to a great extent, and the English ham is only asked for by the private consumers. Our trade has not increased in volume because the prices have been so unremunerative during the last two summers that we are not laying down stocks to the same extent. We lay down our goods principally in the winter for summer consumption, but we have found when the summer came that the demand was for the American and Danish products at a much lower price. Frequently in the summer the Danish gammon would be sold 8s. or 10s. less than the price of bacon, because it is an article that will not keep and has to be sold quickly. The price has been frequently 52s. per cwt.—5½d. per lb.—for a Danish ham, and the middle part of bacon without the ham has been making up to 64s. or 66s. Employment generally has not increased, but owing to improved appliances and refrigeration we have been able, not only to hold our own, but rather increase our trade. The rate of wages has been about the same.

State of Trade.

Effect of Imports.

Profits.

Competition.

Labour.

I attribute the change in the state of trade to competition, which is too severe for the general body of traders, only a few being able to make any progress. They cannot very well compete against the imported Danish bacon. There is no improvement in market organisation and there is no difficulty about means of transport; but we find railway rates are exceedingly high as compared with other countries.

Causes of Change.

Agricultural colleges would be a great help in educating farmers as to the manurial value to the land of different pig foods, and the unsuitability of certain foods for feeding purposes through their producing an inferior class of meat—soft, oily bacon, some even with a tallowy taste. The proportion of lean meat in a pig also requires demonstration. The great aim of factories abroad is to produce a class of meat, white and firm in fat, with a suitable proportion of lean. An important factor generally ignored by farmers is the suitability of breed of pigs. The support given to agriculture by the Danish, Canadian and French Governments, is very much absent in this country. In the report by Lord Ikerrin, who went over to Denmark with a deputation, is the following paragraph: "The whole-hearted fashion in which the Government assisted the industry by providing the constant advice of experts, by assisting the prosecution of inquiries in foreign countries, and perhaps more than anything else by advancing subsidies to steamship owners to ensure more frequent transit to England, etc., etc."

Education.

The only country with which I have been able to compare railway rates is Denmark. The rate for bacon from Copenhagen to London, *via* Hull, is 40s., distance 640 miles; Hull to London 181 miles. Inland rates in Denmark for bacon, 112 to 114 miles, are under 10s. per ton. Rates from Brierley Hill to London, 124 miles, 25s. 4d. per ton. Denmark inland rate, same distance, in 5-ton lots is 7s. per ton for bacon. Perishable goods go at the same rate for quick transit by goods train, a special red consignment note being used to indicate that fast transit is necessary. We get a special rate for fresh meat of 2s. 6d. per cwt. to Manchester, a distance of 80 miles. The rate in Denmark for the same distance would be 5d. per cwt. The transport rates by land and water bear more heavily upon my business than upon that of my competitors in other countries.

Railway Rates.

Competing countries have an advantage from the fact that land is cheaper abroad, and the cost of erection much less in Denmark than in this country. A much cheaper class of building as a bacon factory is permitted abroad than what would be allowed here.

Comparative Advantages.

Systems of technical and commercial training and higher education are of value in promoting a superior class of workmen. We find that the workmen as compared with some 20 years ago are of a very different class, they are better educated and we can do more with them.

Technical Training.

1129 Formation of Trusts.

Amalgamation of large concerns is of great value. In the United States particularly it centralizes business, gives greater command of land and water carriage, and provides access to markets. It helps to bear down competition in any particular district and remove internal competition in purchasing and selling. Foreign competitors in the shape of large trusts are enabled to secure the best stands in all markets as they overbid all opposition, the magnitude of the combined businesses being such as to reduce the common charges to a small percentage. We believe American trust bacon, &c., is frequently sold here at less money than in the States.

Effect of Foreign Tariffs.

Very little export trade in ham is done now as compared with former years. A large customer in London always advises us when the goods are for export, because they have to be specially dried to stand the damp in the hold of the ship. We missed his trade for some considerable time and on asking him the reason, he said: "all the goods you sent me were for South America, but the tariff now is about 37s. 4d. a cwt. They have some reciprocal treaty with United States whose goods go in at a much less tariff rate than ours, so the trade is completely gone." I am not aware that the tariffs of foreign countries tend to efficiency of production by securing the home market. The natural advantage of a large and cheap supply of material, together with the huge business done at the large factories in the States, enable them to make considerable profits out of residuals, practically waste in the case of smaller concerns. Competing countries are compelled to seek the British market for their goods as against other markets which are not only closed against them by tariffs, but in some cases by restrictions.

1130 Duties.

Maize.

Maize should be admitted free for feeding purposes, if broken as suggested in the case of barley. Maize is largely used for feeding cattle and sheep, but it is not a useful food when used alone. We feed a large quantity of pigs and use 1 part maize, 5 parts barley, 1 wheat and 1 peas, ground together. This small proportion of maize gives a relish to the food and the animals are very fond of it, but once when we were out of peas and substituted a larger proportion of maize the quality of the meat deteriorated.

Bacon.

We do not want a prohibitive duty on pork and bacon, but the foreigner should pay some tax. A duty of 2s. per cwt. on bacon would be sufficient. This would be fairly imposed and would not affect the supplies. Bacon enters largely into the consumption of the poorer classes, but there are other articles equally cheap. Chilled beef is being sold very low and it is a benefit to the working man. Bacon is not his staple food, he has it for a change.

Pork.

The proposed duty on pork would probably assist the home trade. The bulk of fresh pork imported is Dutch small pork, which would permit of a small duty. If pork were taxed and bacon admitted free, perhaps the pigs now coming in such large quantities from Holland, instead of coming as carcasses and fresh pork, might be salted and come as bacon to avoid the import duty. But it is more likely that the pork would continue to come, as Holland caters for the London market and the trade has been steadily built up to meet the British demand. A protective duty of 5 % would, therefore, affect the price of imported Dutch fresh pork. The proposed duty would not affect the prices of American pork nor diminish the import, as we only get the surplus production of U.S.A. for which the manufacturers have no other outlet.

1131

Lard.

Imported lard should be subject to a duty of 5 %.

Effect on Barley.

The standard quality of British hogs would deteriorate if maize were admitted free and barley taxed. The tendency would be to make too much of maize. A tax on flour would be helpful to the pig industry because the offals are so useful to the farmer for feeding purposes.

Colonial Supplies.

The Canadian supply of bacon and hams is illimitable. The quality of Canadian bacon is almost equal to Danish, and Danish bacon curers would suffer severely under any system of preferential tariffs.

Merchandise Marks.

Undoubtedly fraudulent trading is prevalent in the bacon trade. English hams, uncooked, are frequently exhibited in the windows and American cooked ham is sold in the shops. If retailers were compelled to mark their goods with the country of origin it would help.

WITNESS No. 232.

1132

MR. A. W. SHAW

(Bacon Curer and Lard Refiner, representing Messrs. W. J. Shaw and Sons, Mulgrave Street, Limerick and Cork).

I can give evidence as regards bacon-curing and in connection with the farming industry, and lard-refining. We trade purely in Irish products.

State of Trade.

Taken as a whole there has been, as far as our Irish trade with England is concerned, a very considerable falling off, more particularly in singed bacon, i.e., so-called Wiltshire cut bacon, the whole side, which goes to the English market. Our chief market hitherto has been London, but with foreign competition we are very rapidly losing the control which at one time Irish bacon and English bacon, such as Wiltshire, had of the London market, as it also had of that of Manchester. Since the strike in Limerick in 1890 the Danes have got a firm footing in the London market, and have been gradually driving us to the wall with quantity and cheapness. Canada is coming in as the third important factor, but her produce does not rank as high in quality as the Danish. Canada is not so keen a competitor though producing an enormous quantity. The only country in which we have opened a trade is France. For the last six months the French Government has given English and Irish bacon a preference over the United States bacon, but whatever is the cause, certainly the French market has been very much better for the last 6 months than it has been for a long time. Since the *Entente*

France.

our orders from Paris alone have been double what they were. The Danes are our chief competitors. In point of quality there is very little to choose between Danish bacon and our own. To get the trade of a country there must be quantity. The Danish killings are from 20,000 to 30,000 pigs a week. In Ireland we used to kill about 15,000 to 20,000, now we are down to 10,000. We do a little trade with the United States. Our stuff pays 2½d. a lb. to get in there; while American bacon comes into Ireland free of duty. We do business pretty well all over the world. We get into South Africa free and there is a protective tariff in our favour, and American goods are taxed 7½%, which is an assistance to us. Most of our goods are sold F.O.B., that is to say they are sold on the quay at Southampton, Liverpool or London, and we have very little to do with paying the duty. Imports have affected the Irish curing trade so seriously that it will mean wiping it out in the end. Profits have decreased very considerably. Now Irish curers are only getting a comparatively small interest on their capital, while formerly there was a very substantial profit to be made. The trade where we distinctly compete against Denmark, the singed bacon trade, is where we are hit the most heavily. That trade has fallen off, taking this year as against the last 10 years, at least 50%.

Denmark.

1133

United States.

The creameries, more particularly the milk factories, have taken the bulk of the milk of the counties of Limerick, Clare and Tipperary into their hands, with the result that we are not getting the pigs from the dairy farmers. When the creameries started first a certain amount of separated milk was brought back to the farmers, but they found it unsatisfactory. In the creameries the tube through which the milk flows from the separator is not kept as clean as it ought to be, with the result that the separated milk becomes germ-laden and produces all sorts of calf distemper. The farmer leaves the can in the morning and when the milk is separated brings it back with the separated milk in the afternoon. The separated milk from the creameries is not always pasteurised, for if pasteurised it can be added to the new milk and returned to the creamery the following day. Under the old system the skim milk was given to the pigs and calves and was a good food material. Since the establishment of the creameries not 10% of the separated milk comes home again. Not a farmer round me gets any back, and as a result there is a great diminution of pig production.

Creameries.

1134

In most of the small cottages in Ireland they have a pig, but they do not eat that pig themselves. It is always sold. There is no such thing as a pig being killed by a farmer. No farmer kills anything now but a fatted sow. The advantage gained to Ireland by pigs being killed at home and the material being used up in Ireland has been estimated very properly at from 5s. to 6s. on each pig. If we had the monopoly of pigs in Ireland, if there was no cross-Channel trade, Ireland ought to have enough to keep us going; but the live cross-Channel trade is a very important factor. The hogs are shipped alive to Holyhead or Liverpool, taken by rail to Wolverhampton, Birmingham and other parts, and converted mostly into fresh pork and sausages, thus reducing our supply of pigs for bacon. On the whole our industry has not been prospering owing to the Danish competition, the unsettled position of the land question (which disinclines the small holder to produce pigs in quantity as he does not wish to appear well off), the competition with pork and the effect of the creameries.

Pigs.

Prices of best Danish and Irish sometimes differ by a few shillings, and sometimes are the same, while Canadian has recently been selling at 14s. per cwt. less than either, or almost at the cost of the raw material in Ireland. The price of pork in Denmark is generally about 4s. a cwt. less than Ireland. The local prices in Denmark for hogs as a rule are 3s. to 4s. a cwt. less, but sometimes they come very close to us. The Danish price for bacon varies according to the brand. The tip-top brand, that is the J.D.K., practically makes Irish prices. The others taper down to 6s. a cwt. less, for small brands. It depends very much on the market. In a strong market they will be very close up to us; and in a weak market they will get down. Some time ago we were getting for Irish bacon 66s., and they were selling Danish for 9s. a cwt. less. It was hot weather, and they over-held stock, and the stuff had to go. We sell Irish bacon to the New York market, simply charging a little extra for packing, at the same price as we should in Dublin. They pay 2½d. a lb duty on going in and yet there is a large and increasing quantity of Irish bacon sold in New York.

Prices.

1135

The elements of cost in manufacture would be apportioned thus: Raw material, that is to say the hog and the raw material to manufacture him, the salt, &c., 90%; wages and salaries, 4%; and other charges, 6%. Labour in Denmark is very much cheaper. The wage of what we call a first-class man in our business, that is the first-class knife man, is 30s. to 32s. They have the same class man in Denmark for about 20s. Assuming that to be correct, Denmark has an advantage in the shape of cheap labour as well as cheap transport. Our working expenses are killing us. These are so very high that we are obliged to keep a large margin between the price of bacon and pigs to cover the cost of production. If the production was increased and we were dealing with larger quantities we could afford to give more to the farmer. The reduction in the amount of employment is very large and the rate of earnings of the workpeople has, on the whole, not increased.

Cost of Production.

1136

When a carcase is exposed we run a risk of having it seized if it shows any sign of tuberculosis. Foreign carcasses are sent in with their heads cut off and it is just at the junction of the head with the spinal column in the glands of the throat where tuberculosis first shows. The result is that a great many really tuberculous foreign carcasses are sold in the English markets.

Tuberculosis.

Fraudulent trading—the substitution of enormous quantities of foreign meats for Irish—bears very hardly upon the English trade as well as on the Irish. Even the Danish and Canadian bacon cannot be distinguished from Irish by the ordinary person. A good deal of foreign bacon is sold as Irish in Dublin, and 50% of that sold as Limerick or Belfast bacon is of foreign manufacture.

Fraudulent Dealing.

The price of lard is practically 50% less than it was 10 or 15 years ago. We used to get 84s. a cwt. for lard which we sell at 42s. now. This is due to Danish and American competition. The American lard is adulterated with cotton-seed oil.

Lard.

Our trade suffers from the preferential railway rates adopted in foreign countries, and transport rates by land and water bear more heavily on our business than upon our competitors in other countries, but they have no advantage in respect of processes of manufacture; we are thoroughly up-to-date. From Liverpool to New York a short time ago they were carrying bacon for us for 11s. a ton, and our client reproached us because we did not send it by the White Star ship, which was carrying it at 9s. The freight from Chicago

Railway Rates and Freights.

**1137 Railway Rates and
Freights**
—continued.

to Limerick for bacon in boxes is extremely low, about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the price we pay from Limerick to London. Improvements in means of transport would not meet the real difficulty but would help. Our transport is very expensive as compared with that of our foreign competitors. The rate for bacon from Esbjerg to London through Harwich is 20s. a ton, or even less, from Limerick to London 34s. 2d., from Cork to London 30s., a very serious item in a closely-cut trade. The neglect of Irish canals is an immense drawback to the country. Their development would benefit the railroads for they would carry cheap stuff, such as feeding stuff for cattle, manure, &c., and cheap raw materials for a very small rate; a class of goods that hardly ever pays a railway company. The total length of Irish canals is very considerable, and if they were put into work again it would be a very great benefit to the country.

Local Rates.

The Limerick rates are crushing, 12s. 6d. in the £, a material item in the question of profit or loss. The reason why the rates are so extremely high is because of the great number of the rural population that have been driven into the cities on account of the land going out of cultivation, and we in the cities are obliged to support them. These wretched people have to come to the workhouse, or else be supported by out-door relief.

**Duties.
Effect on Milling.**

A little tax on wheat would not have any harmful result, because it would stimulate the growing, a very important matter to us. We have magnificent water-power in the Shannon, but there is not one water-mill now working. Dotted all over the place are a number that have been closed and are lying derelict, but with the proposed duty on flour these mills would re-open and the offals made there would help our business. If mill offals were cheap we should have plenty of pigs. The falling off in the production of mill offals has been a very serious matter to us.

1138

Maize.

I am most strongly in favour of letting maize in free. Maize is the farmer's friend. It is largely used in Ireland for pig and cattle feeding, and is so useful a feeding stuff that I do not see how it can be done without. In conjunction with potatoes it makes an excellent food for pigs. The ideal bacon is made from barley meal and whey, or barley meal and milk; but we cannot always get this and must do the next best thing, and on the whole well-grown Indian meal with properly cooked potatoes is about as good an average food for pigs as can be got. It has been said that Indian corn should not be taxed because it is the staple food of the people. That is a very great mistake. The people do not live on Indian meal, except to some small extent in the north. If maize were admitted free and barley taxed the quality of English pigs would not be improved. 5% on bacon would have very little injurious effect, it would certainly increase the home production, it would develop the industry of rearing and fattening pigs, steady our trade and make it more continuous. It would give employment both in the farms and in the factories. If there was 5% put on American pork, it would still come in as cheap as it is to-day. The United Kingdom is simply the dumping ground of the poor American stuff. It has to be dumped somewhere, and 5% will not prevent it being dumped. I certainly favour a tax on bacon as being a manufactured product; it would be an important help to the industry of bacon curing and pig producing. Danish bacon is not the staple food of the poor but the well-to-do man's food. In Ireland the poor eat a certain amount of American bacon, but they eat neither Canadian, nor Danish, and it is a mistake to suppose that taxing bacon is taxing the poor man's food. The offals alone, the heads, &c., going out of our factories, ought to be able to feed the country without having American bacon at all; and if we had a larger production there is no doubt the offals would be very cheap food for the people.

Dumping.

1139

WITNESS No. 233.

MR. H. HERBERT SMITH

(Bacon Curer, Calne; Land Agent to the Marquess of Lansdowne, the Earl of Crewe, and other land-owners in Wiltshire and the West of England; Chairman and Managing Director of the Wiltshire Bacon Curing Co.)

The estates under the charge of my firm comprise upwards of 30,000 acres. I am Chairman and Managing Director of the Wiltshire Bacon Curing Company at Chippenham, the Highbridge Bacon Curing Company at Highbridge, Somerset, the Bradenham Ham Company at Chippenham, and the Chippenham Cheese and Butter Factory. I have also until recently held the post of lecturer on the History and Economics of Agriculture at the University of Cambridge.

1140

Maize and Bacon.

In the autumn of 1903 my attention was called to a speech made by the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain at Glasgow on the question of "Tariff Reform," and I noticed that while he made suggestions that taxes should be placed upon fresh pork and barley, bacon and maize should continue to come into this country free. I had some conversation upon this matter with certain gentlemen interested in the industry of bacon curing, and drew up a memorandum which, through the medium of a mutual friend, I forwarded to Mr. Chamberlain, who in reply to this communication wrote in October:—"My statement as to the taxes I propose to impose was only a broad outline, and I have always maintained that nothing can be finally settled until all the representatives of the trades concerned have been fully heard. If, however, their view of the situation is confirmed I should have to meet it as they suggest, either by taxing bacon as well as other meat, or by relieving barley; most probably by the former. Meanwhile they need not be alarmed, as nothing will be done without consultation." I was subsequently invited by Mr. Chamberlain to join the Commission, but for reasons into which I need not enter, I was unable to accept such invitation.

**Pig-Rearing and
Feeding.**

Wiltshire has a very large number of allotments and small holdings, there being by the latest returns 21,878 allotments under 1 acre, besides a very large number of small holdings varying from 5 to 50 acres. The majority of the pasture farms run from 50 to 200 acres. Nearly all these holdings are occupied by tenants who give special attention to the rearing and feeding of pigs, and this is particularly the case with the allotment tenants and small holders. The smaller holdings could hardly be carried on if the industry of fattening pigs was

to die out. The pig, which is fatted from the refuse produce of the ground combined with barley meal, enables them to pay the rent of the land, and in many cases of the cottage, while the labour expended upon the ground is repaid by the regular crop. In the smaller farms where there is dairy produce, such as skim milk and whey, pig-fattening is largely carried on, and not only is it a profitable industry directly, but it is most valuable indirectly in consequence of the high quality of the manure produced by the pigs. If pig-feeding were to disappear it would be a terribly severe blow to allotments and small holdings, not only in Wiltshire, but throughout the whole of the West of England.

From 1896 to 1900 a long series of experiments in pig-feeding was carried out under the auspices of the Wilts County Council, and it was then ascertained that the best results were attained by the use of barley meal combined with dairy produce, while the use of maize was found to be most undesirable, except where sparingly used in conjunction with other foods. Pigs fatted on maize are worth from 20s. to 30s. per cwt. less than those fatted on barley meal, and should barley be taxed and maize be left free, under the idea that maize would be used instead, the industry of the fattening and rearing of pigs would be largely curtailed, if not destroyed. Were we dependent on pigs which were fed on maize meal, the industry of bacon curing would practically cease to exist, as in the face of the present competition nothing but the very best quality of bacon would have the least chance of surviving. So great is the difference in the value of pigs fed on maize compared with those fed on barley that it would never pay the feeders to rear pigs on maize in preference to barley.

Feeding Experiments

No industry has been attacked by foreign countries more than bacon curing. In the last 30 years the imports of bacon, hams, fresh and salt pork have increased 12-fold. This arises to a great extent from the tariffs set up by other nations, which drive into this country the entire surplus products of other countries. Foreign tariffs greatly interfere with our trade, and are most exasperating as we find bacon and hog products being imported while we are unable to trade with foreign countries in consequence of the tariffs set up against us. The low freights on which foreign manufactures are brought over to England are also a heavy handicap to us, the transport from America to London, a distance of between 3,000 and 4,000 miles, being less than the transport from the West of England to Paddington station.

Foreign Competition.

In Denmark from 30,000 to 40,000 pigs are killed weekly. Denmark is chiefly dependent upon its agricultural industry, which is fostered and helped in every possible way by the Government. Their goods being rigidly excluded from Germany and from other countries with which they might do a large trade, they send to Britain large quantities of dairy produce, generally butter. In the production of this there is much skim milk, and until bacon curing was taken up by them, this was considered almost a waste product, but it is now used in conjunction with barley meal for turning out large supplies of bacon. Out of something like £20,000,000 of bacon, ham and pork imported in 1902 under 10 % came from British possessions, including Canada. If Canada and other parts of the Empire had some preference shown to them their output could be vastly increased. Everybody in Denmark is a farmer. It is the national industry, and all, from the aristocracy down to the small peasant, march shoulder to shoulder in the closest bonds of self-interest, with a view to making this particular industry successful. They have the voting power and push the interests of the farmer to the very greatest extent. In this country exactly the opposite takes place. Nobody cares about agriculture except those actually engaged in it, and they are only a small minority, and do not march shoulder to shoulder. They have no co-operation; they are divided very much amongst themselves. It is very difficult to get them to realise that if they made a combined effort they might help their industry.

Denmark's Success.

It is a mistake to suppose that bacon is the staple food of the poorest of the population. The poorer class eat very much more pork and colonial mutton than bacon. This is borne out by the statistics compiled by the Board of Trade, which show that even in the country, where the labourers in many cases kill their own pigs, the amount of bacon is only 37 % of the total meat consumed; while in the urban districts workmen's families only consume 14 % of the total amount of meat eaten. In both country and town the working classes are great consumers of fresh pork, and the effect of taxing this and not taxing bacon would be to further increase the supply of cured bacon while it would diminish the amount of pork now coming in fresh. This appears a very strong argument against any material difference being made between bacon and pork in the application of a tariff.

The Food of the Poor.

The benefits of the Agricultural Rates Act have gone entirely to the tenants. I do not know a single instance of rent being raised in consequence. On the contrary I have known several reductions of rent since that Act was passed. I have known one or two cases in which the rent was raised, but these were under special circumstances.

Agricultural Rates Act.

The general trend of mind of the agricultural labourer is not what it used to be. They rather despise agricultural matters, and seem to be hungering to go to the towns. They do not care for rural life, they have lost all interest in it. The education that is given in the rural schools now fits the people more for the town than for the country. Allotments are unprofitable and the two combined make the men give up the land and go to the towns. If they were taught to take more interest in country affairs, and were educated with that view, it would be better. Our educationalists confuse education with attainments. They teach these people a great many things quite useless to them. Their power of observation is gone. In the old days the old agricultural labourer was a far more observant man than the present man is. He was a man who, although he could not read or write, was really in many ways a better educated man, his memory was also wonderful.

Education.

I have had considerable experience with regard to small holdings. If it were possible to increase the number of freeholders in this country it would be a good thing, because it would politically strengthen the hands of the agriculturists, but my experience has led me to believe that there is neither much ability nor wish on the part of the rural population, or small agricultural people, to buy small holdings. Some time ago Lord Lansdowne received a petition signed by about 200 people, many residing on his estate, asking him if he would lay out a portion of his estate, which they considered was very well adapted for small holdings, and equip it with buildings and small houses, and allow them to take it from him by purchase on the deferred payment system. Lord Lansdowne said if they could get an intermediary capitalist who would undertake it, he would be very glad to sell the farm to him. Nothing was done for some time, but eventually the petitioners approached the

Small Holdings.

1145 Small Holdings
—continued.

Small Farms Company, who bought the farm and laid it out. They did not actually erect the buildings but they laid it out, saying they would sell the land on very advantageous terms on the deferred payment system, and would lend a certain amount of money to equip the holdings with houses and buildings. Notwithstanding the petition sent to Lord Lansdowne not one of those holdings was sold. Half of the land was let in small holdings, but half of it was sold back to the old tenant of the farm, and further than that the part that was let was not a success. After the ground had been sucked dry by these small men, it became very poor, full of couch, and was eventually put up for auction, and sold for what it would fetch. Small holdings have, in favoured localities, been a success; but my experience of the practical working does not show either the desire or the ability to acquire these holdings as freeholds on the part of the rural population. This was farmable and suitable land. There are an immense number of allotments, and a large number of small holdings all round, so that it seems difficult to explain why this should have been such a conspicuous failure.

1146 Successful Tenants.

Allotments were cultivated some years ago but now they are being given up. I have lately taken back 3 fields that were let as allotments and laid them down to grass, and added them to the farm. The reluctance to keep on allotments is due to the difficulty in finding a ready or profitable sale for the produce, and the fact of their being given up is evidence that they cannot be cultivated at a profit. In the vale of Evesham they make fruit-growing, under certain conditions, profitable. These people do not leave the country to go to the town to such an extent. In any particular locality where agriculture pays, the population is not decreasing, which goes to show that it is entirely a matter of £ s. d. I have known instances where a man has begun with an allotment. Then he got hold of 2 allotments and later a few more, and then got on to a small holding, and then to a small farm, and later on to a big farm. I know one man who began as an agricultural labourer with an allotment, and now he is the biggest tenant on the estate. He has 3 farms and does a lot of dealing. On Lord Lansdowne's estate there are a number of comparatively small farms. If the tenant of one of them leaves, we have a good many applications for it. Some of the men have begun with an allotment and then have gone to a small farm, and to a bigger farm. In some cases these men have put their sons into small farms. That is under a system of renting, not as freeholders. The small farms run from 50 to 150 acres. On Lord Lansdowne's estate they have a great deal done for them. The buildings are very well kept up, almost entirely at the expense of the landlord. There is a great demand in Wiltshire for small holdings, and I am a great believer in them myself. It is unfortunate that the practical outcome of them, so far as forming freeholds is concerned, has not in my experience been successful. The income derived by landowners for the last 80 or 90 years from their expenditure on new works and actual outlay to make the land profitable is not more than 3%, and in many instances much less. They get nothing for the land. There is no value attached to it. When people talk of the land belonging to the people it is the greatest rubbish in the world. In Canada or the United States the people pay, though the land belongs to them, more than they do in England, because they have to bring the land under cultivation. A man gets a grant of 200 or 300 acres of land in the backwoods of Canada. He has to spend £5 to £7 or more an acre to bring the land under cultivation—and then he has not got anything like the buildings and houses provided by the English landlord, and he has to borrow the money at 6% unless he finds it himself, and that comes to the same thing because they could get 6% for it. The landlord in England lends the money at 3%. The cheapest land in the world for the English market is English.

1147

Duties.

A moderate tax of 5% on bacon and hams from foreign countries would very little affect the consumer of these articles in this country, while it would give a stimulus to our home trade, which has been so severely competed against in the last few years, and would also help our Colonies. Canada is capable of largely increasing her hog products, and should be able to send us larger supplies if she had a small preference given to her. I should like to see 10% put upon lard, because I think it is purely a manufactured article. At present the English and Irish lard trade is completely knocked out by the huge consignments of lard which are dumped down in our home markets at such low prices that our articles are brought down below the cost of manufacture. A 10% duty would not very much increase the price, though it would be some sort of protection to us and would help the home producer. A small tax on wheat would not have any prejudicial effect upon the population. It would not raise the price, and it would be the means of giving a slight preference to our Colonies and produce a considerable revenue.

Duty on Lard.

Duty on Wheat.

Duty on Flour.

It would be a positive advantage to tax flour, as this is a manufactured article and the offals yielded from such manufacture would have a beneficial effect upon the home cattle and hog production, making it worth the farmers' while to extend breeding and rearing.

1148 Duty on Maize.

Duty on Barley.

Mr. Chamberlain has been misinformed that maize is very largely used by the poorer classes in their diet or by agriculturists as a food for rearing live stock. In all branches of agriculture, linseed, decorticated cotton cake and barley meal are much more necessary for feeding stuffs than maize, and if the country had the choice between barley in grain and maize being taxed it would be very much more to its interest if barley were admitted free and a tax put upon maize. I am speaking of barley for feeding stuffs only, not malting barley. I should be in favour of having a 5% tax upon malting barley, but I would sooner see barley admitted free altogether than see grinding barley taxed. I attach very much importance to the fact that the latter barley is useful to the farmer as a feeding stuff especially in the West of England where we rear a large number of pigs. In Lincolnshire they use a large quantity of maize, but that is a question very much of price. A 5% duty on maize would make very little difference. At present the price of Azof barley at Bristol is 18s. per qr. of 400 lbs., maize 21s. 9d. per qr. of 480 lbs. The price of a quarter of barley meal delivered to the store is 22s. per qr. of 400 lbs., maize meal delivered, 26s. per qr. of 480 lbs. It would be a very difficult thing to distinguish between barley for malting purposes. Some of the Bristol millers import large quantities of barley, put it through a sieve and keep all the bigger or plumper grains. They grind that, and sell the remainder as cheap malting barley. How would you deal with a case like that? It is the same quality of grinding barley and yet a certain percentage is separated from it. If the barley were used for malting you could always get at it by a tax on the product. Mr. Chamberlain's proposal would have hit the bacon curers in two ways. It would have increased the amount of bacon cured abroad, because the pork being subject to the tax would have

had to be turned into bacon, and sent here in order to avoid the tax, while on the other hand the taxing of feeding barley would have penalised the industry of pig-feeding by raising the price of the principal food on which they are fed.

WITNESS No. 234.

Written Evidence.

AN ENGLISH BACON CURER.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal to omit bacon from any scheme of import duties will not be generally accepted, as it would be very harmful to the English and Irish bacon-curing industry, and to a large extent to that of raising and fattening pigs. Twenty-five to thirty thousand pigs are killed weekly in Denmark, other European countries contribute, and the United States send large quantities of bacon to England; the Canadians are large curers, and New Zealand has made a start. This is the competition the English and Irish curers have to face. The Dutch export a large quantity of pork to England. In Mr. Chamberlain's proposals pork is treated as meat—if taxed as such, it will be converted into bacon and come in free.

Foreign Competition
in Bacon.

Barley is the best feeding material for pigs. The report of the Agricultural Committee of the Wilts County Council on the pig-feeding demonstrations held in Calne, 1896-1900, bears this out, and on this score English bacon curers would have no objection to a tax on maize. But maize used in its proper proportions is not an objectionable food, and it would perhaps meet the case if feeding barley were put upon the same basis as maize and treated as a raw material. To tax barley and not bacon would severely penalise the bacon-curing industry, the curers could not afford to pay so much for pigs by several shillings, and pig raising and fattening would diminish, greatly to the loss of the rural labourer and small farmer. The Colonies could produce more bacon, and probably would, if protected from foreign competition, and the home bacon curers would not be averse to this. If the proposed tax were shifted from the barley to the bacon, the proposals would have the practically unanimous support of the trade. A 5 % duty would not stop imports, as the foreigner has laid himself out for the trade and would pay the tax, but it would place the home curer on a fairer footing.

Effect of a Duty on
Bacon.

It must not be forgotten that the bacon-curing trade not only employs a large number of hands, but provides a larger quantity of cheap food in the offals—heads and feet, liver, kidneys, meat cuttings and sausages; these cannot be made abroad, and would be so much food lost to the poor if the industry diminished greatly. But it is a mistake to suppose that bacon is the food of the poor. Colonial mutton is more truly so, and is much cheaper than bacon.

The Food of the Poor.

WITNESS No. 235.

Milling.

MR. HERMAN BIDDELL

(Land Agent and Farmer, Playford, Ipswich).

I am a land agent, and have farmed largely for 50 years in the County of Suffolk, near Ipswich. At present I am farming only a very little just round my own house. In 1853 I began with about 100 acres, and ultimately farmed 600. The average was about 450 acres. About $\frac{1}{4}$ of my land was grass for cattle rearing, the rest corn land.

The change in the position of agriculture is due to the low price of produce. What one has to sell, corn at any rate, is so depreciated. That is the main reason. 1874 was the highest point of prosperity in my experience, falling gradually from that time, but from 1880 is the period of great depression. The fall in prices has affected rents very much, and also the value of the land. The landlords have been harder hit even than the tenants in Suffolk. It is in the heavy barley-growing districts of Suffolk and Essex where the most land has gone out of cultivation. The more the land is devoted to corn-growing the heavier the depression. Profits have largely diminished in recent years. At the present time within a circuit of 5 or 6 miles from Ipswich the milk trade is doing very well, and has very much developed. Milk is sent into the town and by rail to London. Generally in the county agriculture is depressed, except in the milk trade, and where they can sell vegetables, etc., near towns. There are a great many hogs fed round Ipswich, and in the county generally, but far more in East Suffolk. 6 weeks ago pigs—such as I was killing—sold at Ipswich market at 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.; a month afterwards they made 5d. Our markets fluctuate now in pork more than anything else, but the price has been very low this year. Money has been lost on pigs, and there was not much barley used for feeding. That grown was nearly all malting barley. Pigs in Suffolk are fed on maize and offal, largely on maize. In West Suffolk I have a farm adjoining a turnpike road for which I gave £2,300 as a trustee, and I will sell it to-morrow for £700 if I can get it. There is a good deal of good land in that neighbourhood, and my brother bought some freehold at £4 an acre. Rents have come down quite as much as the price of produce, but we complain of the rates and the price of labour.

State of
Agriculture.

There is a dearth of good experienced men, and the quality is not so good as it used to be. They do not work as long and not so hard. The labourer knows that if he does not give satisfaction to his master, his master will retain him because he cannot fill his place. The reason of this change is the scarcity. If a man is a good man he goes into the town as a railway man or a policeman or anything for which a good man would command a situation. There is no great advantage in the town from a money point of view, because the living and rents are so much higher than in the country, but the young men like it. They get more wages but their expenses are more. It is said that in parts of Northants some of the labour is coming back from the towns. I have not heard of any in Suffolk, but it is not very easy for a man to move if he has a settlement in a town with a wife and family, he does not know exactly where to get a house or employment.

Labour.

1153 Cottage Accommodation.

The cottage accommodation is getting better in our neighbourhood. The landlords are doing a good deal, that is, those who can afford it. A good many have been abandoned from want of tenants. I am agent for a small estate the other side of Framlingham. I offered to put a cottage on it in thorough repair, but the tenant said it was no use as there are 9 very nice cottages in this parish without occupants.

Wages.

The rate of wages has not changed much. We are paying our men 13s. a week and more for harvest.

Education.

I have seen no benefit from what I might call the scientific education that has been given in Cambridge and other places. If you could teach farmers the value of reading, we do not want any more education than what we can get, but they will not take advantage of what they can get. There is no use whatever in teaching the labourer before he gets on to the farm. I may be much behind the times; but the best men I have had, who could use a chisel and a hand saw, had no education at all.

Agricultural Rates Act.

The relief given under the Agricultural Rates Act went into the tenants' pocket. A good deal more than that would be needed to increase the demand for land. The landlord does not give notice to quit on the idea that the land is getting worth more because of the reduction of rates; the advantage goes to the occupier. I do not think the landlord took any share of it. I have never heard of any instances to the contrary, and was in a position to know.

Local Rates.

The help we got from the Agricultural Rates Act is much more than swallowed up by the increase of the rates, by the County and District Councils, for roads and the salaries of their officers.

1154 Co-operation.

A very convenient system of forwarding small parcels to London has been instituted, but it has not affected the general position of agriculture at all. Our principal markets are much as they were 30 or 40 years ago. There is no difference in organisation. Co-operation exists chiefly with regard to poultry and eggs. In the neighbourhood of Framlingham it has been worked with great success amongst the small farmers and they have now started a large co-operative society in Ipswich. The society has been extremely beneficial; I cannot say what the figures are but an enormous quantity of eggs has been collected from the small farmers and passed on to the buyers in London. The development has been something enormous and I am anxious to see that system further developed. It will succeed best amongst very small farmers and poultry men, it would not have any general effect upon agriculture. Even in that co-operative society they bought oil-cake wholesale, and sold it to the little men without profit.

Duties.

I am altogether in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals as to the duty on flour. Just so much duty on bread stuffs as would induce the importer to send in the wheat unground is what is wanted. A 2s. duty would be enough to effect this, and give a little advantage to the Colonies also. We are suffering from not getting the offal of the wheat which is sent here as flour instead of grain. The price of offal increases with the imports of flour, as the following figures will show.

Offals.

1155

I have kept most accurate accounts from before 1854 up to the present. In 1854 wheat was very high, and occasionally made £17 6s. per ton, 78s. per quarter. Opposite the entry of the receipt from wheat is a payment for bran at £7 a ton, that is 41·7 % of the value of wheat. In 1855 wheat rose a little, and the bran came to 40½ %. In 1854 the importation of flour was insignificant compared with that of wheat. 40 years later it had increased enormously. In 1890 wheat was 31s. per quarter or £6 17s. 9d. a ton, and bran £4 10s. a ton, thus making the price for offal 62·9 % of the price of wheat. In 1895, with wheat at 23s. per quarter or £5 2s. per ton, bran stood at £4 a ton. So that we were then paying 78 % for the offal on the price we sold the wheat at. In January, 1905, with wheat at 30s. per quarter or £6 13s. per ton, I bought bran at £5 10s. delivered. I tried to bargain with the miller, but had to pay £5 10s., which was 82½ %, so that it has gradually got up from 40 % to more than double and this because of the great importation of flour in proportion to wheat. Figures taken from *The Standard* of 1902 show what this is costing the land in this country. During the last 20 years, from 1882 to 1902, we have imported 125 million sacks of flour, which would have represented, if it had been grown here, 6½ million tons of offal, worth, at £4 a ton, £25,000,000, which we might have had thrown into this country for use. In 1901 we imported 9,030,092 sacks of flour or 1,128,761 tons, the offal of which would be worth, at £4 a ton, £1,806,016. *The Standard* put the value of the offal at £4 a ton; that is the price of the lowest kind, viz., bran, whereas the actual price of the average of the offal that we were losing was £5 5s. a ton at the least. 451,504 tons at £5 5s. would amount to £2,370,396 in the year. That is not all the loss, however. Voelcker puts the manurial value of bran at 30s. a ton, so we must add to the value of the offal an amount of £677,000, making in all something over £3,000,000 a year we are losing by the offals being kept abroad instead of coming over in the shape of wheat. These figures are all taken from my own cash book, and the public returns of the worth of wheat, and I unhesitatingly affirm that the land is losing £3,000,000 a year and more from this loss of feeding stuffs.

1156

Prices.

Figures show that a small import duty has never affected the price, and no harm to the consumer would come from a duty on flour of about 2s. a quarter, which would induce the importation of wheat instead of flour we should then have the labour of grinding it, and the offal. Even a 2s. duty on wheat would not affect the price, and at first would be no use to the farmer in that way; so that 1s. would be of as much advantage practically or nearly as much as 2s., excepting as a source of revenue. That 1s. duty was left on as a registration fee in 1846, and was continued till 1868 when Mr. Lowe took it off as enhancing the price to the consumer. The price of wheat for the 10 years before was something like £2 9s. 3d. a quarter, and singularly enough it rose after to £2 11s. 8d. a quarter the next year. These figures are not quoted as shewing that repealing the 1s. duty enhanced the price, but as shewing plainly that when a duty is so small as not to affect supplies it does not enhance the price to the consumer. In 1902 the 1s. duty was renewed. In the year following, this tax produced not £900,000 as Mr. Lowe's 1s. duty did, but £2,500,000. In 1903 Mr. Ritchie abandoned this addition to the national revenue on the ground that it enhanced the price of bread to the poor. Actually the price of wheat was higher after the duty was taken off than when the duty was on, another proof that a small duty does not increase the price to the consumer, and that, until an import duty is high enough to curtail the supply, the importer or the grower pays it. When it gets high enough to alter the amount of wheat or other article sent in, it is another matter, but small duties never have affected the price. The farmers would be greatly

benefited by a large supply of cheap offals, as there is nothing so good for young stock as the offal of wheat, dairy farmers would be especially grateful. What made it go up so high in proportion to wheat was that everybody was using it. I gave £5 a ton for offal in January, 1905, delivered from a steam mill at Ipswich. The miller might sell offals to merchants in Ipswich, but would not export them, they would be all eaten in Suffolk. All feeding stuffs, including maize, should be admitted free.

I cannot see any objection to putting a good round duty on barley. A 4s. duty on malting barley, with some assurance of its permanence, would be enough to cause a good deal of land in Suffolk that is now going back to grass to be broken up and cultivated, and the labourers brought back by a greater demand for labour. There would be some difficulty in deciding at the port whether it is malting or feeding barley, but it could be done. The brewers might have something to say upon this, but the farmer would remind them that they never varied their price when barley was 30 % higher than now. We pay exactly the same price for beer as then—the labouring men at any rate.

It has been pointed out that if there was a duty on machinery our implement makers would raise their prices. On looking through my books from 1880 to 1890 I find the average cost for renewals of my implements—I started with some very good ones—was not more than £10 a year, 6d. an acre, a sum so small as not to be a matter of great importance.

Barley.

Machinery.

WITNESS No. 236.

MR. WILLIAM HIPWELL

(Farmer, Miller and Corn Merchant, Sharnbrook, Bedford).

I am a member of the firm of Hipwell & Sons, farmers, millers and corn merchants, at Sharnbrook, in the County of Bedford. We are the third generation in our mills and farms, and I have lived in the neighbourhood all my life, and have seen what has gone on there during the last 44 years. My brother and I farm 100 acres as tenant farmers and about 250 acres of our own land. We have two country mills, and we do business with all the people in the neighbourhood as well as in many other parts of the country—in the general corn trade. Of our 350 acres of land, 135 are arable, 160 upland grass (some of it poor), and 55 acres meadow, liable to flooding by the River Ouse.

In recent years agriculture in our neighbourhood has gone very much to ruin. The best farmers only have survived, a large number have either failed or left, or have died and not been succeeded by their sons. The land generally has fallen into the hands of a lower class of men. Much of the hill land has gone down to poor grass. A certain class of men manage, somehow or other, to scratch a living off the land, but not as formerly by high farming and the use of plenty of capital. We used not only to send wheat away, but flour; now many farms which once produced largely yield nothing at all, because they are let for 5s. or 6s. an acre, some of them simply to run sheep over. Still, the farming in our neighbourhood is no worse now than during the last 10 years. Years ago we had not only enough wheat for our mills, but there was plenty to export to Birmingham, Leicester, London, &c. This year we are using more than half foreign wheat, because we cannot get English, and so cannot send any flour out of the district.

State of
Agriculture.

The change in the condition of agriculture in our district is principally due to the fall in prices of two or three articles—wheat, wool, and beef, and to some extent also barley. Since the abolition of the malt tax the premium on best barley has been largely lost. The feeding of horned stock and fat lambs, the growing of wheat, the producing of wool, are all less remunerative and there is nothing more remunerative to counterbalance. The profits of the last 2 years have been considerably less than usual. A great deal of wheat when new is not very good. The same class of wheat purchased in May is very different. We always used to give more money for old wheat. I think it would pay to grow wheat at 36s. For many years after I was in business as a miller we looked on 38s. as a minimum price. At the time of the Franco-Prussian war, if I remember rightly, it first fell to 36s., and then an enormous quantity was bought by millers and dealers on which they lost heavily. Now, one of our difficulties as farmers is the dead level of prices. Variations are so gradual that it is astonishing how little scope there is to profit by them compared with what there used to be. Occasionally there are variations of 2s. per quarter between one month and another, but we used to have the same sometimes between one week and another. The price of bran varies according to the demand. A great demand for offals generally leads to millers manufacturing as much as they possibly can. Then they very often manufacture flour beyond the demand, and the price sinks. The price of bran does not necessarily rise and fall with wheat. Wheat might be very dear, and bran extremely cheap. The high price of bran and fine offals is one of a farmers' hardships and still more to the poor man who keeps a pig and is the great consumer of the fine offal. The price of bran to some extent depends on the price of linseed and other feeding stuff with which it competes, on the size of the turnip and hay crops, &c. The demand for offals has been the salvation of the country miller. The best offal of the wheat is the intermediate portion between the bran and the flour. It is called by all kinds of local names—"sharps," "toppings," "pollards," &c.—"middlings" in our own neighbourhood. The broadest bran goes to Ireland principally. It is dearer in proportion to the price of flour than formerly, and it is more valuable for feeding cows than flour itself, as ground wheat will not stand in the place of offals, the animals do not do so well on it.

Price of Wheat.

Offals

I think the drawback given on re-exported offals was lost to the consumers here.

Drawback

My experience of the bread trade with which I have had a good deal to do, is that the consumer does not derive anything like the benefit that is supposed from the variation in the price of wheat. When wheat was as low as 17s. a quarter, bread never went below 4d. a loaf. To-day it is 32s. and 33s. (practically double),

Bread Trade.

1161 Bread Trade
—continued.

yet the price of the loaf, instead of being double, is only 5d. The cost of manufacturing and distributing is as great when wheat is cheap as it is when it is dear. The expenses of the baker in distributing bread are enormous in proportion to its value, and particularly so in the country. It was remarkable that when we were selling flour at 16s. a sack, and buying wheat at 18s. a quarter, the price of bread did not sink lower than it did, probably for the same reason that the retail price of beer does not sink. However cheap any of the materials from which beer is manufactured are, the retail price remains the same, and the poor man is perfectly satisfied to pay 2d. for a pint. If you charged him 3d. he would complain, but he never asks for it to be 1½d. The same applies to a certain extent to the price of bread. I have heard working men say "As long as we can buy bread at 4d. or 5d. a loaf we shall never hurt."* From 1860 to 1870 everything was very prosperous in our neighbourhood, but about 1874 a change began, and we have never had a good time since. The cheapened means of transit for all kinds of agricultural produce from every part of the world reduced the value of everything the farm produced, the expenses (including the rates, which had been largely increased during the previous 15 years) remaining the same. The effect of the fall in prices has been to farmers gradual loss of capital and reduction to penury; to the land, that considerable tracts of good corn-growing land have become derelict; to the villages that the population has largely diminished. All the prosperity seems to have centred in the towns.

Labour.

1162

In some districts there has been more difficulty than in others. The constant complaint is that the men are too independent. In some parts labour was scarce three or four years ago, but there are now many more men about. The quality is not as good as formerly. There is a considerable absence of men who are skilled in many things on the farm.

There is no doubt that the men generally do not do the amount of work that they used to do. In some villages they have been more troublesome than in others. Years ago the people in our neighbourhood used to bake their own bread, and they might save enormously if they chose to do so now-a-days. So they might by brewing their own beer, but they will not do it so long as it can be bought at a reasonable price. They will not do anything that takes trouble, although it may be economical to do so. That is my experience of the working man.

Wages.

As far back as 1874, 1875 and 1877 we paid practically the same wages we do to-day, viz., 13s. and 14s. a week. In 1879 we paid a little more, but at the present moment we have any number of men seeking employment. The amount of work done for the money has diminished.

**Cottage
Accommodation.**

Our population has so diminished that cottages are plentiful. They are kept up by the landlords and on the whole very well, the rents charged being from 1s. 3d. a week up to 2s. 6d., with gardens, and including rates and taxes. This is not on commercial lines at all.

Local Rates.

Rates and taxes continue to increase. The cottagers should pay their own rates however small they may be; at present they take no interest in public expenditure because they pay nothing themselves. They do not know whether the rates are high or low, compounding, instituted when labourers had no votes, should be abolished.

1163

**Agricultural
Rates Act.**

The Agricultural Rates Act has been a great relief. The rateable value of land round us has sunk very much of late years.

**Annual
Outgoings.**

The proportions of the different items of my expenditure per acre are: rent, 21s.; labour, 28s. 6d.; provender (including feeding stuffs), 32s.; general expenses of all sorts, 8s.; rates, taxes and insurance, 3s. 6d.—a total of 93s. per acre.

Co-operation.

There is no change in market organization in our neighbourhood. Railway communication is quicker than it used to be. As to co-operative buying and selling we have none. I do not think that it would be of any use to us because the competition is so great. You can buy cake or anything wanted on the farm for very small profits now-a-days, and in selling, there are so many people in the corn trade that corn merchants' profits are cut exceedingly fine, finer and finer every year. I believe the expense of co-operation would be greater than the corn merchants' profits.

Railway Rates.

Railway rates are very unequal in a great many cases. I have bred fat lambs for some years. In winter time when you get the best prices, butchers very often want single lambs or a small quantity; if I send a single lamb by passenger train from my own station to Leicester or Nottingham, I am charged about three times as much for it as for a dog, though carried in the same way as a dog would be. No doubt a good deal of favour is shown to foreign produce. The imported lamb interferes very much with that bred in this country.

1164 Duties.

Any duty on wheat and flour would be of use to the farmer. The 1s. duty on American flour tended to reduce the price of bran. We manufactured more wheat than we otherwise should have done. The duty helped us very much in the flour trade. We consumed a great deal of English wheat that year, for flour to London, which we should not otherwise have done. Small duties would assist us. A duty of 2s. would affect the price to a very small extent—probably to one-half, judging by the effect in France, which is about 7s. out of 12s.

Bounty on Corn.

I think that if a small duty were put on imported corn, and the money raised by that used for a bounty, it might act favourably. Many men who are obliged to sell their corn at harvest or soon after, might be in a position to store it for a much longer period if they had a bounty; 5s. a quarter, payable quarterly, would be a very large bounty.

Effect on Labour.

The labourer needs employment. Anything that benefits the farmer benefits the labourer by increasing demand for his labour. Many farmers now cannot employ as many men as they would like, because they do not get a sufficient return for their produce to enable them to do so. I consider that the farmer pays in his rates and taxes a duty on everything he produces from which the foreigner is exempt, for that reason alone a small duty is absolutely necessary to make things equal.

* Many parts of the country are much dearer for bread than we are, and yet there are no complaints there.

MR. JOSEPH RANK

(Miller, Seed Crusher and Merchant, Joseph Rank, Ltd., Hull and London).

The British milling industry is in a much better position than it was either 5 or 10 years ago. The output has very much increased; efficiency, through the introduction of improved machinery, is second to none in the world; profits for the last 2 years have been fairly good, but are bound to fluctuate from year to year; and employment in this country was never better for the working miller, though, of course, better methods of handling grain and flour, owing to the adoption of superior machinery, have to some extent dispensed with labour.

State of Trade.

The importation of foreign flour is less than it was 5 or even 10 years ago. It has dropped a little over 4,000,000 sacks from the maximum, which was reached in 1889* :—

Imports.

1166

Sacks of 280 lbs.				Sacks of 280 lbs.			
1895	..	..	..	1900	..	..	..
1896	..	..	..	1901	..	..	..
1897	..	..	..	1902	..	..	..
1898	..	..	..	1903	..	..	..
1899	..	..	..	1904	..	..	..
				1905 (Estimated)	..	..	..

Importations of flour into British markets will always be affected by, and to a certain extent dependent upon, the production of America and other countries that make the United Kingdom the dumping ground for their surplus. When, for example, the United States have a large surplus, which they dump upon our shores at a low price, it inevitably affects the British milling industry in an adverse manner. One reason for the decline in imports is that America, for the last 2 years, has had poor crops of wheat, and, with a continually increasing population, the home consumption nearly equals the production. The area on which they grow wheat is continually on the decrease, and I have no doubt that, through neglecting to use fertilizers, their land in some degree is being impoverished. They have also discovered other markets and now do a very good business with China and Japan in flour. There can be no doubt that the improvements made in the systems of milling in this country have helped to bring about this state of things in some respects.

U.S.A. Dumping.

1167

On every sack of flour imported into this country the loss to labour—mill hands and office staff—works out about 1s., so that on an import of 6,000,000 sacks per annum the loss would amount to £300,000. Very little of the work would be done by the small mills in the country, unless you could very much increase the production of wheat in this country. It would be done by large mills at the ports, as you can certainly reduce the cost of production in the larger mills, and also obtain an improved quality of flour. There is no doubt that much of the American flour here is sold at the same price as it is disposed of in their own country at the mill door, and sometimes even at a lower price.

Effect on Labour.

The mills in this country will compare favourably with any flour mills in the world; in fact, I have not the least hesitation in saying that there are better mills in England than in any other country—America included. I recently had a gentleman from the States looking over our mill in London, and he had to acknowledge, after looking carefully into everything, that they had no mill equal to it in the whole of their country. I can corroborate this from what I have seen myself of the mills in America. Neither the United States, France nor Germany can teach us much in milling to-day. Not only have we better mills, but I believe we have more efficient millers. English millers have to know a great deal more than millers in foreign countries. We have to deal with the wheats of the world, and most of these have to some extent to be treated differently. In America a mill is much more easily run, for the simple reason that they have to deal with only one kind of wheat, and that is about the easiest wheat to mill. The difficulties that the British millers have had to contend with and overcome are the very things that have brought out the best qualities in the man, and have put him in the forefront.

Mills Compared.

1168

I have no experience of combinations in this country as I am glad to say we have none. I feel very strongly that we should, at the time we recommend tariffs on manufactured goods coming into this country, also recommend that a Bill be passed to make it illegal to form trusts, kartells or combinations. There is nothing like competition and rivalry for creating efficiency. As long as you are able to keep these to the fore no matter what kind of duty you impose the price of the manufactured goods would not advance very materially in this country. The rivalry that exists between various firms and companies would be sufficient to prevent them from increasing the margin of profit to any extent, especially seeing that they would be enabled, by increased output, to reduce the cost of production.

Trusts.

* For complete figures see statistics embodied in Report.

1169 Duties.

The imposition of 2s. per quarter duty on corn (except maize), other than Colonial, with a corresponding duty on flour, giving a substantial preference to the miller, would for some time have a very marked effect in stimulating the British milling industry, but ultimately it is possible that over-production would ensue. This would mean internal competition on a huge scale, when a number of weak men would have to go to the wall. A higher duty upon imported flour than upon imported wheat would, of course, materially benefit the British working miller, by finding more employment for British labour. I presume that a duty on flour would apply to Colonial flour as well as foreign. As regards the question of food supplies in time of war, there is no doubt that this country is in a very precarious position. If we should at any time be engaged in a war with Russia, or even Germany, they could in a few days, if they so desired, buy up the bulk of the crops of the world which are grown outside the British Empire, and in that way, in a few months, they would be able to starve us out, seeing that our ironclads would be no use whatever in any attempt to seize the wheat bought up by our enemies in other countries.

Effect on Labour.

Effect on Food Supply.

Effect on Offals.

1170

The probable effect upon the British milling industry by the retention in this country of wheat offals would inevitably be great. It has been repeatedly stated that the port millers, especially those at our eastern ports, habitually export their offals to the Continent, principally to Holland and Denmark, to be used for the feeding of cattle and pigs, the product ultimately finding its way back into this country in the shape of bacon, butter and other dairy produce, imported at such prices as practically to preclude competition. This complaint was especially strong in 1904, when the small imports of American flour gave a great impetus to the milling industry in England. The truth is that this export of surplus bran has been going on from Hull and Liverpool for a number of years, and but for it millers would have great difficulty in disposing of the offals. The English farmer does not seem to want them. If he has plenty of food of his own, either in the field, the barn or elsewhere, he does not buy much millers' produce. If no flour were imported, the tendency would be to lower the price of offals, but with the English farmer it does not seem to be a question of price. If the farmers of Denmark and Sweden can pay the freight and carriage from this country to their farms, and then back again on the butter, why cannot our farmers do the same, seeing that they have the advantage of the freights and railway carriage on both the bran and butter? It has, further, been repeatedly stated that the port millers ship their offals at prices much less than they are making at home, and sell at whatever price the Continental countries will give. So far as my experience goes, this statement is absolutely false. Our average price in Hull for bran for export this year (1905) has been much better than the average of that sold for home consumption. At the present moment (March) we can make for shipment bran 5s. to 7s. 6d. per ton more than for a good deal of the bran we have to sell in some parts of the country. There must surely be something wrong with British dairying when Continental buyers are willing to give such prices, and also pay 15s. to 20s. per ton expenses from Hull to the Continent. What these expenses mean per ton on butter I cannot say, but should put them anywhere between £10 and £20. The accusation of dumping to keep up the home price brought against the English millers is not borne out by facts, as the price obtained for export has been better than that obtained at home. At the same time there have been occasions when the price has been as low as £3 per ton, and the British farmer could not take it, and we had to take a trifle less—perhaps as much as 5s.—in order to dispose of it.

Alleged British Dumping.

1171

Offals and Price of Flour.

There is another and very important side to the question. If, in order to sell the whole of the bran we produce, we had to sell it in this country, and consequently at a less price, the price of flour would inevitably rise as a consequence. £1 per ton less on bran would mean 1s. rise on every sack (280 lbs.) of flour. Competition is so keen among millers that the matter is bound to right itself in that way. The reasonable margin, which is all we can look for in milling, has to be got out of the flour or the offals, or both.

It may be asked why we should continue to sell to the trade in this country at 5s. to 7s. 6d. per ton less than we can obtain for export. The answer is that we are obliged to sell to our flour customers what they require, in order to retain our flour trade with them, and it is only occasionally that this difference occurs. Years ago we thought that offals might be reduced in price if we could prevent the American flour from coming in, but things do not always work out as one thinks. The Continent takes a great quantity of bran from this country, and it is fair to presume that the Americans would have shipped some had they been grinding wheat. Our farmers have the first call on the offals, and they have it at a less price than the foreigner, seeing that he has carriage to pay. We must not lose sight of the fact that it is an advantage to this country to manufacture as much as possible of the flour that is consumed here.

1172

Preference.

I hope we shall not allow the Colonies to send in their produce free when tariffs are imposed against other countries, unless they can be induced to give us a free interchange. This should be our ideal regarding the Imperial policy, and it might be effected by our giving them a preference of, say, 50 % where they are now giving us 33½ %, stating at the same time that unless they could see their way to give us the same 50 % preference we should have to reduce our preference to the same as they were giving us. By this means they would speedily see that it was to their interest to give us the 50 %, and when we had obtained the 50 % from them I should increase our rebate continually until we reached the ideal, which by a judicious policy might be brought about within the next 15 or 20 years.

WITNESS No. 238.

1173

MR. J. W. REDMOND

(Miller, representing the Dublin North City Milling Company, Limited, Phibsboro' Road, Dublin).

The chief cause of changes in recent years in the milling trade is the competition of manufactured flour coming here from America and Australia, America principally. The trade has fallen off very much and a large number of mills have been closed. In 1875 there were 20 flour mills working in the districts between Dublin and Belfast. They are all closed now. In Newry there were 7 or 8, now all closed but 1. In Portadown there were 3, and in Drogheda 5. The trade has been affected by changes in the system of manufacture in recent years, but the mills now in this country are all well adapted for the manufacture of flour; they have changed their system from millstones to rollers and have all got improved machinery. Foreign countries have no special advantage in respect of the process of manufacture. In the last 18 months the milling business has been very fair and the total net profits have increased owing to the short wheat crop in America. The main sources of our wheat supply are Russia, Australia, India, and North and South America. We mix them all. Russian wheat is strong, Australian wheat has the colour and flavour, and Indian wheat improves it. We find we make a better and more saleable sack of flour if it is all mixed.

Mills Closed.

1174

American flour is sold in this country at a ruinous price in order to maintain prices on the other side. The United States' surplus is very often sold here under the cost of production, in other words it is dumped on us. In 1896 flour was as low as 18s. a sack—at that price we should give up business very soon, or business would give us up.

Dumping.

The effect of the duties proposed by Mr. Chamberlain upon the milling industry would be good. 2s. on wheat (9s. 4d. per ton) and 2s. 6d. a sack on the flour would assist us very considerably and would be a great benefit to our trade. The more duty put on the flour and the less on wheat the better for the miller. The more grain that is ground on this side of the water the greater advantage both to our trade and to the farmers because they get cheaper feeding stuff and in greater quantities, and further, the offals produced at home are more wholesome than the offals produced in America. The principal objection to the American bran is that it has to be packed tighter in the bags to get it over cheaply with the result that it gets heated; in fact we have very little American bran here, it is made of a harder class of wheat and the bran is small. The best bran made in this country is from South Australian wheat, it is even like Irish wheat, but if the wheat is of equal quality and the offal is fresh it would be as good from one country as from another, or should be, as we have all the same system of manufacture.

Duties.

Offals.

1175

WITNESS No. 239.

MR. ALFRED R. TATTERSALL

(Of A. R. Tattersall & Co., Consulting and Milling Engineers, 82, Mark Lane, London, E.C.).

In the year 1884 there were in the United Kingdom about 8,000 mills at work, and so far as I can ascertain about 7,000 of these were engaged in the manufacture of flour from wheat (some also grinding barley, maize, &c., for cattle foods), the balance of 1,000 more or less were entirely engaged in the manufacture of cattle food and grinding grists for farmers. There are now not more than 800 mills driven by wind, water or steam in the United Kingdom making flour, and approximately another 1,200 grinding rough feeding stuffs for cattle. The capacity of many of the flour-making mills has very largely increased, so that the aggregate output of flour now may not be very seriously below that of 20 years ago; but there is no record of the output of the mills as running at the earlier date. In Ireland alone during the period under consideration the number of mills manufacturing flour has been reduced from 240 or 250 to about 40, and most of these are in or near ports. Scotland has shared the same fate, there being now not more than 30 flour mills in the whole country. To account for these changes there is not one but several causes, of which the following are the chief: First, the revolution from the mill-stone to the roller process. This system lends itself, perhaps, somewhat better to operation on a large scale, and as native wheat is not available in large quantities (except in very few localities) many large mills have been erected at the ports to grind sea-borne wheat, which is delivered by mechanical means direct into the mill, on the same system as those in Minneapolis, where practically speaking, no hand ever touches the material, and to all intent there are no people employed in the mill at all. Several older mills use both methods, i.e., stones driven by water and rollers driven by steam. The second reason for the diminution of mills has undoubtedly been the lessened production of home-grown wheat. When inland mills have to draw their supplies of wheat largely from the ports they cannot compete with mills situate at the ports,

Milling Industry.

Port Mills.

1176

1177 Port Mills
—continued.

Mixed Flour.

as the railway charges on wheat are the same as on flour, although the value of flour per ton is greater than that of wheat. The inland miller is thus at a serious disadvantage, for the port miller sends only flour inland, and his bran (say 30 % of the wheat) goes at a low freight to the Continent. The foreign flour importer has no bran or offals to deal with, and consequently can often undersell the inland miller with a flour made from the same wheat (in the country of its origin) from which the country or inland miller has largely to make his flour. The inland miller is obliged to buy a certain portion of foreign wheat in order to produce a flour which meets the modern requirements of the baker, who looks for certain qualities not possessed by the flour made entirely from native wheats. This quality is called "strength," and implies the extra gluten necessary to enable the production of a large and spongy loaf from a given quantity of flour. The taste of the public requires a class of flour with a good deal of hard wheat in it, and the bakers find it more profitable to use this strong wheat, as it makes a greater output of bread per sack. No. 1 Manitoba produces a larger percentage of bread than any other flour and consequently the bakers want it for mixing, and will pay a higher price, but there are U.S. wheats, such as Duluth No. 1 Hard, which are almost as good as No. 1 Manitoba.

Owing to bad times the English farmer sells his wheat too soon and before it has hardened in the rick. It would become better if it was kept longer. The condition of English wheat left in the stack as now, is presumably damper than when it was put into barns as 70 or 80 years ago, and it is liable to be too damp when it goes to market. It would require less addition of foreign hard wheat for milling if it were drier, and of a more glutinous quality.

1178

American Competition.

British milling to-day is admittedly ahead of that of every other country in excellence of manufacture, but it is seriously handicapped in competing with American mills because of its limited supply of native wheats, and the limited outlets for its products. America on the other hand produces far more wheat and flour than she can use, and being the line of least resistance they—especially the flour—find their way to this country. If the farmer paid more attention to the miller's needs, grew wheat of better quality and paid less regard to mere yield; if, again, the miller would encourage the farmer by paying full value for the best quality of wheat, which closely approaches the foreign varieties upon which he has to pay railway freights from the port; and, thirdly, if railway and canal companies would give a preferential rate for wheat in bulk, and provide means for its carriage, as against flour in bags, as is the case in America, from which country the British miller has most to fear from competition, the inland miller would be more independent of foreign supplies. In round figures we require about one sack of flour (280 lbs.) per head per annum, or approximately 40,000,000 sacks; we grow wheat enough to make say 10,000,000 sacks, and the balance has to be imported either as flour or wheat. Our average imports of flour alone amount to about 8,000,000 sacks per annum, and the major part of this is dumped into this country from the surplus American production, and is often sold at a lower price here than the same flour makes at the mill door, simply to keep up the output of the mammoth American mills. To make this 8,000,000 sacks of flour per annum would employ a capital of £160,000,000, and 640 country mills of average size, turning out say 250 sacks a week, and 2,500 men at an average of £1 a week, or a total of £175,000 per annum in wages; no small advantage to the localities in which the mills are situated. Nor is that all; for every sack of flour turned out there will be 1 cwt. of offals for feeding cattle, a total of 400,000 tons per annum, at a reduction of 10s. to 20s. per ton on present price. Foreigners do not sell the offals in their own country at very remunerative prices, but the quantity sent here from America is not to be compared with that of flour. The port millers here send their offals abroad because they can get a better price on the Continent at times, though there is a certain demand here for them, because the freight would be lower to Holland and Denmark than the railway rate on them if sent inland; that is to say we are grinding wheat here and feeding the dairy farmers in Denmark.

American Dumping.

1179

Offals.

The baker averages 384 lbs. of bread from every sack of flour (280 lbs.), or 96 quartern loaves. At 5d. per quartern he gets 40s. for every sack of flour converted into bread. A rise of 4s. per sack on flour would be met by a rise of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per quartern loaf—say, 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. instead of 5d. It does not seem probable that with a duty of 3s. per sack and a rebate of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ to the Colonies, flour would rise more than 1s. per sack, or bread more than $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per loaf to the consumer, and, if the law as to the weighing of bread were more strictly enforced, would actually cost the consumer no more.

Duties.

Preference.

Free import of flour from Canada would simply lead the Canadian and American capitalists in 5 years' time to erect mills in Canada and export as Canadians.

1180

A higher duty on flour than on grain would help the milling industry of England.

Effect of Duty on Labour.

The 2,500 extra mill hands required does not represent the whole advantage to labour; machinists, sack and bag makers, and many other trades would find ample employment, and not least the milling engineers, for it is a curious fact that 75 % of the milling machinery now in use in the United Kingdom is of foreign make.

Few industries have suffered so acutely from foreign competition as that of the miller, and its close connection with the question of food supply in war time entitles it to the serious consideration of any Government. The duty and rebate named would go far to restore the industry.

WITNESS No. 240.

MR. J. B. WHITWORTH

(Miller, Corn Merchant and Farmer, Victoria Mills, Wellingborough).

I am a somewhat large country miller, and a small farmer. I come of an old agricultural family, and have been associated with agriculture all my life, but have only been an actual farmer during the past 4 years. My farm is in Wellingborough. I could get £50 an acre for it. It is out of the town but in the parish of Wellingborough. The location is good, close to rail and river. It is very high-class land and would let at 45s. per acre easily, but without the mill I should have to give it up. I have been in the milling business all my life. I farm 170 acres, 40 of which are arable, the rest grass. I want the arable for roots and straw. The land is not too heavy for potatoes and more might be grown, but they are not in favour and we think too much of the labour. I graze bullocks chiefly and a few sheep and pigs. The sheep pay remarkably well with people who can farm, but the land having gone out of cultivation, there are 3 million less sheep in the country, for ploughed land will produce considerably more mutton than grass. Sheep and dairying are the only branches of agriculture that hold things together. My brother, who farms 1,000 acres at Bedford, does well out of sheep and cows—nothing else. Profits have seriously diminished all round. We are losing £2 to £3 per acre on corn growing. The change in the condition of agriculture is due to foreign competition, and began about 25 years ago.

State of
Agriculture.

1182

In Northamptonshire we are fortunate in having excellent landlords, but land at the present time is not making for many of them more than 2 % on the cost of buildings erected—for the land itself, nothing. It is a most pitiable state of affairs. I know the poverty that exists in the neighbourhood amongst the farmers that I come in contact with. At our Wellingborough market I used to think nothing of earning a £5 note in selling them cakes, maize, etc., in the good times, but now if one sells them corn or cake another buys their wheat, so that I know they are really short of money. Corn growing on no rent at all would be a loss, but most farmers have lost more than the rent in the last 2 years.

The rents in the district are very moderate. You can get really good farms for £1 an acre.

Rents.

The supply of labour is not bad, but the boot trade takes many young men away. I have not much fault to find. I have no trouble whatever. Towns tended to attract the younger men years ago, but village life has improved very materially in the last 20 years—the last 10 especially. The inclination is rather to come back to the land, many are sorry they left it. The boot trade raises the price of wages in our district, but just now it is so bad that they are glad to work on the farm for a very small wage.

Labour.

1183

The wages of labourers have advanced 30 % in recent years. The ordinary farm labourer gets 2s. 6d. a day, and the stock man 16s. or 17s. a week, and a house. He is comfortably paid, but he would make more in the boot trade, when it is good.

Wages.

Local rates have advanced, but have been partially met by the reduction of half on agricultural land. I pay much higher rates being close to the town. People farther out do not complain of the rates, the townsfolk grumble more than the farmers, but Wellingborough is low rated.

Rates.

A great benefit all round would accrue from Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. If the trade of the country were more profitable, agriculture would share in it, through a better demand for our products generally, beef, mutton, pork, and even hay. The labourer knows the bad state of affairs and he is beginning to say that something must be done. A small duty on wheat and a larger duty on flour would benefit the milling trade. The milling would be done in this country and the farmer would have the offals. Even 1s. or 1s. 6d. would be sufficient to keep the milling in this country, 2s. 6d. would be my maximum as a miller. The 1s. on foreign wheat a year or two ago, made us all busy, we had more offal to sell. New mills were built on the strength of it. It opened our eyes to the grumbling at Mark Lane and Liverpool by the flour factors. It showed us that flour was simply dumped here without profit, and that applies to other industries. I felt that as an inland miller, and speak with as much authority on that point as anybody in the country, because there are very few mills as large as mine except at ports. The drawback allowed when the 1s. duty was in force, was said to be an actual loss to stock feeders in this country, because it induced millers to re-export their offal. The port millers of Newcastle, Hull, and Leith export their offal. No drawback should be allowed, for these offals are re-exported to Denmark, and come back as butter and bacon; some goes to Brittany, chiefly bran. It is excellent food for milk, and for cattle and pigs. The value of bran is very great. Farmers may have to pay more for their cake, but millers' offal will be cheaper, and cake will not be wanted. I make the finest bullocks round Wellingborough, and never use oilcake. A customer of mine, who has tried both, says that a bullock will get fatter and, money for money, pay him more, on millers' offal than on the best of oilcake. The best stuff in imported cake and feeding stuffs is composed of the offal we re-export, and we pay more for it as oilcake than as offals.

Duties.

1184

Offals.

A bounty of 30s. an acre would stimulate the growing of wheat even more than a duty of 2s. per quarter. The labourer would have employment and higher wages. Preferential arrangement with the Colonies would not greatly change the character of my farming, probably I should grow more corn.

Bounty.

1185

WITNESS No. 241.

MR. JAMES G. CRAWFORD

(Representing the York Street Flax Spinning Company, Ltd., Belfast).

1186

Irish Flax Cultivation.

Flax cultivation in Ireland has greatly fallen off. It should be increased in the interests of farming and the linen industry (the oldest and greatest of our few important industries). Flax spinners must have abundant raw material grown in their own country. In 1864 the acreage under flax was 300,000; 1887, 200,000; 1897, 100,000; and since 1897 it averages 40,000. In 1898 it fell to 35,000 but has since increased to 50,000. The smart decline in 1896, 1897 and 1898 was partly due to foreign competition and the system of handling, but chiefly to bad seasons. The quantity produced in Ireland since 1897 was 10,000 tons; 30,000 tons ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the flax consumed) came from abroad. Its production is almost confined to Ulster. A few hundred acres are grown in the other provinces, sufficient to show that a very good crop can be produced. In Munster and Leinster through better soil and climate a superior crop could be produced, but the marketing and labour difficulties have prevented its extension. Most flax-growers in Down grow about 2 acres, the average is 1 $\frac{1}{2}$. Flax is sold for yarn for weaving into linen. The refuse is sometimes used for paper-making. The decline of flax cultivation is owing to unremunerative prices and deficiency of labour. The price is considerably lower than Belgian flax because ours is inferior. Greater skill in cultivation and after-treatment would raise prices and yield a profit to our farmers. In Ireland the farmer who grows the flax prepares it for the market. When it matures it is rooted up and immediately plunged into ponds, and fermentation softens the gummy and woody parts of the plant so that the fibrous parts can be easily detached, after which the flax is scutched. Skill in retting consists in detecting the exact point at which the woody part is sufficiently softened without impairing the strength of the fibrous part. If retting is carried on too long the strength of the fibre is diminished, if insufficiently the woody part is not softened enough to be easily detached from the fibre. Irish green flax straw is immersed in water found on the spot, whether suitable or not, and is often retted when the temperature cannot keep the water hot enough to yield the best results. The consequence is that flax is imperfectly retted and great loss of fibre takes place in scutching. Having woody particles attached, it is very inferior in value. Scutching consists in passing the flax between fluted pressing rollers, followed by a process of beating with revolving wooden arms, until the fibrous part remains and the other part has been mostly detached. The seed worth £3 to £4 per acre is lost by our system. At present flax is only grown by our smaller farmers whose families provide them with labour, and they do not till their ground carefully or produce good crops generally, but the larger farmers are prevented by labour difficulties from cultivating flax. Flax is as easy as other crops to grow and large farmers should be glad to add flax to the crops they already cultivate as it is remunerative when grown under proper conditions. Irish farms except in the grazing districts are much smaller than English or Scotch, the average is 25 acres, 40 being considered substantial and 100 an exception.

1187

English and Scotch Cultivation.

We have bought small quantities of flax in England but English cultivation has almost died out. They grow good straw but they ret the flax in tanks heated by far too much steam, and the flax loses most of its strength. This could be overcome and good enough flax could be grown in England. It used to be grown largely in Scotland but has practically disappeared.

Belgian Methods.

In Belgium the grower generally sells the flax in the field to a scutcher after the pulling and drying is finished. To keep the flax properly it is dried on the field like corn is dried in the stook. The scutcher removes and stores it for a winter and rets it the next summer, after taking off the seed which is a valuable by-product for feeding cattle, sowing, or crushing. This system enables the scutcher to transport the fibre to the place with most suitable water and to choose the best season for retting. In Belgium almost all the flax is retted in the Lys, a river so valuable for retting that it pays to transport flax from Normandy and north Holland to ret in the Lys.

Irish Experiments.

1188

To ascertain whether the Belgian system can be applied to Ireland, experiment is being conducted in Down with the aid of a grant made by the Irish Department of Agriculture, and under the Flax Supply Association of Belfast. The experiment began in 1903 with flax bought from the field at £12 per acre; 1903 was the wettest autumn for many years, and most severely tested the possibilities of the system, but although through the severe weather and local inexperience some flax was lost, it was proved that flax drying is possible in this climate. Bad seasons damage crops also in Belgium. The experiment was continued in 1904, flax was slightly cheaper and the drying was easier and cheaper. The experiment is being resumed this year. Ireland is colder than Belgium, and as the temperature of the river Lys (68° Fahr.) obtains the best results, a Belgian patent is used to imitate Lys retting: the flax is placed in tanks with inlet and outlet for water regulated to correspond with the river Lys' slow current, and the temperature is kept at 68° by steam pipes. Flax indistinguishable from Belgian is produced, far superior to the same quality ordinarily treated. If this plan fulfils its promise our flax cultivation might be largely increased. The Department is paying more attention to seed and very helpful lectures have been given. A report to the Department has been drawn up by a committee of which Mr. Reade was chairman.

Labour.

Flax requires much labour in proportion to acreage. Our difficulties are the cost, quality, and scarcity of labour. A farmer with only 2 acres of flax cannot acquire the same skill as a man who is handling 100 or more acres. The Belgian scutchers maintain a constant supply of skilled labour to deal with flax, scutching in winter and retting in summer, but our farmers use ordinary labourers. In Ireland flax treatment is carried on when the grain harvest is coming in, and great difficulty is experienced in obtaining casual labour when most wanted.

* The following figures, showing the profitable nature of the flax crop when grown on suitable and well-farmed land, even under the present Irish system, must be considered as of great interest to farmers. The name of the grower, who lives in County Down, can, on application to the Secretary of the Flax Supply Association be given to anyone interested in the matter.

Profits on Irish
Flax Crop.

1189

	1903.	1904.	1905.
Acreage sown	8½	8	11
Number of barrels seed used	4	4 less 5 qts.	5 less 7 qts.
Number of stones scutched flax produced	393	346½	578
Stones per acre scutched flax produced	45	43½	52½
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Price received per stone	0 8 1	0 7 6	0 8 1½
Total cash received	157 19 2	129 3 10	238 14 0

EXPENSES.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Rent, at £3 per acre	25 10 0	24 0 0	33 0 0
Seed, labour, scutching, &c.	55 5 0	54 13 4	75 7 2
	80 15 0	78 13 4	108 7 2
Balance, net profit	78 4 2	50 10 6	130 6 10
Cost per acre	9 10 0	9 16 7	9 17 0
Profit per acre	9 4 0	6 6 4	11 17 0

1190

They promise to be of the highest importance to the flax industry, and to issue in extensive development of the growing of flax in Ireland, as they will enable any farmer in Ireland to grow and market the crop without having to conduct the delicate and difficult process of retting. They are being carried out by a Special Committee of Flax Supply Association on behalf of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, who have made two grants in aid, of £500 and £350 respectively. They were initiated four years ago; two years' operation have been completed, and a third will be completed during next winter.

Millisle Retting Ex-
periments.

The results are highly encouraging, having demonstrated that flax can be dried successfully in this climate when proper methods are adopted. This is the first and most important point in developing Irish flax culture on a wider basis than hitherto, and is absolutely essential if an Irish industry is to be established on Continental lines. The seed, worth £2 to £3 per acre, was saved, and when sown, gave as good returns as the best Dutch seed.

1191

By desire of the Department (which has taken up the position of an impartial critic of the experiment) a quantity of flax straw was divided into two equal lots. One part was retted at Millisle by the patent system of Loppens and Deswarte. The other was sent to Courtrai and steeped in the Lys. Both lots, when retted and scutched, were examined by an Inspector of the Department, and by several flax spinners. That which was retted at Millisle was pronounced superior to the other. Rather more than a year ago, the services of a skilled Belgian expert were secured. His knowledge and experience enabled him to suggest some valuable modifications of the methods previously adopted, so that still more satisfactory results may be confidently expected for 1905 and 1906 crops. To summarise results up to date:—

- 1.—It has been proved that flax can be thoroughly dried in the field in Ireland.
- 2.—That the seed can be saved, and is of first quality.
- 3.—That the system of retting (Loppens and Deswarte's patent) is at least equal to the Lys, as to quality and yield of fibre produced.

WITNESS No. 242.

MR. ROBERT THOMPSON, J.P.

1192

(Flax Spinner, Lindsay, Thompson & Co., Ltd., Mulhouse Works, Belfast).

The growth of Irish flax has steadily diminished from 310,000 acres in 1864 to 44,000 this year, partly through land going out of cultivation, partly by increased cost of labour, and partly because the prices have been less remunerative. The highest prices ruled during the American civil war which also accounts for the large acreage in 1864. Flax spinners of Ireland use 40,000 tons of flax annually; 8,000 Irish grown. We import £3,000,000 worth flax and tow annually into the United Kingdom: from Russia £1,593,530 flax, £260,170 tow; from Belgium £921,235 flax, £26,208 tow; from Holland £144,993 flax, £9,701 tow. Russian is the poorest quality and lowest price, it is not a dangerous competitor in quality but in cheapness. We have a large field for home consumption of Irish flax. 806,000 spindles are at work spinning flax and 31,000 looms weaving linen. These employ 70,000 hands spinning and weaving, and 60,000 in shirt-making, hem-stitching, finishing, &c. Our spindles have decreased 7·1 % and looms have increased 50 % during the past 30 years. The linen trade is healthy—it is Ulster's largest trade, but is generally hindered by foreign tariffs. The climate of Ireland is excellent for the manufacture of flax fabrics. Determined efforts have been made in America and the Continent, but Irish linen manufacturers are still first in fineness and beauty.

Flax Cultivation.

* Addendum to evidence received July, 1903.

1193 Belgian Methods.

Belgium produces the best flax : the climate, soil and treatment are favourable. Their flax is sold in the field and afterwards treated by experts. Retting is carried on in the river Lys, which is specially suitable, its temperature is higher than Irish rivers, which promotes advantageous fermentation. Flax comes from France, Holland, and all Belgium to be retted in the Lys. They grow better flax and take more care in scutching and dressing for the markets, consequently higher prices are obtained for the finished product.

Irish Experiments.

We are at present experimenting at Millisle, Co. Down, to improve Irish flax and make it a more favoured crop amongst Irish farmers. We have constructed tanks with a slow stream of water heated to 68° Fahr. running through like the Lys which is a slow-running river. The increased temperature promotes fermentation, with improved results in the after processes. We have proved that the seed can be saved as a by-product. By crushing the seed for feeding purposes it is worth £3 per acre less cost of manipulation, 30s. net additional profit. It is one of the best cattle foods. Seed for sowing is 50 % more valuable. The lecturers sent out by the Agricultural Department will benefit us, and we want to develop the better system of treatment. If we could buy the flax in the field and save farmers the trouble of pulling and retting, many more would grow flax.

1194

WITNESS No. 243.

Tobacco.

COLONEL NUGENT EVERARD, J.P., D.L.
(Farmer, Randlestown, Navan, County Meath).

I have 25 years' farming experience, and am a member of the Board of Agriculture, Council of the Royal Dublin Society, and County Council, chairman of the county committee of agriculture and technical instruction, on the executive committee of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and president of the County Meath and other agricultural societies. I own and occupy 1,406 acres ; 1,145 grass, and 261 tillage. I also rent much land on the 11 months' system from my own tenants who do not farm. They pay me £1 an acre rent, and receive 50s. for the accommodation. Land let in Ireland before the Land Act, 1881, cannot be recovered except from failure to pay rent.

State of
Agriculture.

Agriculture in Meath is very depressed. It is chiefly grass rapidly deteriorating through the 11 months' system of grazing, due principally to the fall in the price of beef owing to foreign competition. Beef pays so badly that many old proprietors let their lands to graziers or grass jobbers whose trade is chiefly supplying English markets with store cattle, thereby depleting the land of phosphates. The great fall in cereals made tillage farming unprofitable. Owing to the greater difficulty of transporting live cattle it became more profitable to lay land down to grass, and graze cattle. The result is depopulation, because under the grazing system there is no employment for the labourer except making hay in summer and cleaning ditches in winter. Grazing has lately become less profitable and I am increasing my tillage and making larger profits.

1195

Tobacco Culture.

For 7 years I have experimented in growing tobacco. Last year I grew 20 acres, the Department of Agriculture considering that less would not be a commercial experiment. For 3 years I have experimented for the Department, but previously I had permission from the Inland Revenue to try small experiments, which were so promising that the Department extended them to other counties so that the results should not rest on my experience alone. Professor Harper, of the University of Agriculture, Kentucky, who came over to superintend the curing, said the soil was perfect and the climate more suitable than that of Kentucky. It requires much labour, especially during the winter for the processes of stripping and sorting. My son obtained, in America, information enabling me to undertake larger experiments. The Department offered a barn and curing apparatus to anybody who would undertake a commercial experiment. County Wexford, represented by the Fourth Farmers' Association, promised to grow 10 acres, but could not get the farmers to undertake the experiment, and I undertook the 20 acres. I had difficulty in obtaining land at short notice in February for a crop requiring as much manure, tillage, &c., as a root crop. The cost per acre for production, including interest on barn is £18. The usual return in America is 1,000 lbs. per acre, which at 4½d., the average price for American tobacco, amounts to £18 15s. The crop requires much moisture either in soil or atmosphere, but is less precarious than any crop except grass. We have seldom had a drier season than this year, but we have a finer crop than elsewhere, even in Kentucky. The manuring is not more expensive than for a root crop, but there are other operations including suckering, topping, sorting, and prizing, and the expense is mostly in the hoeing, which (when the plants reach a certain size) must be done carefully by hand, because then every plant is of value. I am satisfied, and so is every newspaper whose expert has reported on our home-grown tobacco. At present the foreigner is given a monopoly since it is forbidden to grow in the United Kingdom. 1,000 lbs. is an average crop, and the duty at 3s. a lb. is £150. A temporary concession has been made of 1s. per lb. refund to the grower. I anticipate £50 15s. per acre net profit, including the refund. This would pay farmers to break up the necessary land, the best fattening land being the best for tobacco.

1196

Labour.

The quality of labour is getting worse and the supply diminishing. I can give continuous employment and therefore get labour at lower wages, but it is difficult to find employment in winter for extra hands required for harvest. Insufficiency of labour can be overcome by employing more machinery. Wages are increasing.

Co-operation.

There has been considerable development in co-operation, our agricultural society has cheapened the cost of machinery, feeding stuffs, seeds, &c., to farmers, who can now buy machinery too expensive to purchase before the society started. Formerly farmers went to grocers for seeds, artificial manure, feeding stuff, &c., or used the sweepings of hay lofts to seed the land. That greatly reduced profits. Now we get the best seeds from the best growers, at 2½ % commission on wholesale prices, and besides benefiting the farmer, our society has been the means of selling £6,000 of machinery, &c., yearly.

Our county committee on agriculture and technical instruction sends out itinerant instructors, who lecture and give instructions in better methods of making butter, keeping fowls, and managing farms. Facilities are also given for obtaining the eggs of pure bred fowls at 1s. a dozen. Extraordinary improvement in poultry has resulted. A local committee in each district arranges these lectures, and provides the best room possible. Demonstrations are given with the simplest dairy machinery, and Meath people are greatly interested. Similar demonstrations are given in farm houses resulting in a better price being obtained for butter, and at local shows some who have had this instruction win all the prizes. Cattle also have been largely improved. We give £15 premium to anybody who buys a bull approved by the Department, and he must allow the bull to serve 30 cows at 1s. each. These premiums are given at shows held by the Royal Dublin and Royal Ulster Societies. A few are given at large sales, but not at local shows because it would tend to inbreeding if bulls served in the county where bred. At the Royal Dublin Society's show the farmer can have his choice of 300 bulls.

We have built hundreds of cottages for labourers. Many are either vacant or occupied by decrepit old men, bachelors, or old maids, because in unsuitable positions. They are sometimes put on a farm against the farmer's wish. To retain labourers where they can find employment, loans should be issued at a low rate of interest to enable farmers to put up houses where required.

Foreign countries have an advantage over our farmers, because the tenure is adverse to the proper employment of our soil. Much land is waste which in foreign countries would be cultivated. When the occupiers become owners they will leave no waste land on their holdings. A farm is often conducted badly because improvements lead to increased rent.

Labour £1,038, feeding stuff and manure £615, machinery and sundries £265.

A 2s. duty on corn would not be sufficient, 5s. is the least that would produce any appreciable result in reviving tillage, but 10 % on meat and live cattle would be of the greatest value. It would not have the effect of raising the price of meat because sufficient beef would be imported from Argentina, &c., to keep down the price, but it would prevent it going lower. Unless meat retains its present price agriculture cannot be maintained, because prices have touched bottom as far as profit is concerned. The staple product of Ireland is meat, and unless we can produce profitably, the interest on any large sum of money advanced by the State for the purchase of the land could not be regularly paid. We do not produce maize, and it should not be taxed, but imported barley competes with ours and much diminishes the price. It should be taxed. We do not use much barley for feeding. The duties would not affect the labourers; 2s. a quarter on wheat would not alter the price of bread. The duty on tobacco abolished or reduced, would give relief from a tax most objectionable to the labourer. He would get his tobacco cheaper, and would get employment in growing it which would enable him to buy more exciseable articles. No country under the British flag pays duty on tobacco grown for home consumption except Ireland. Considerable revenue would be derived from duties and should be used to relieve taxation.

Education.

1197

Cottage
Accommodation.

Foreign Methods.

1198

Annual Outgoings.

Duties.

1199

WITNESS No. 244.

MR. CHAS. J. CROSFIELD

(Chairman of Crosfield's Ltd., Sugar Refiners, 323, Vauxhall Road, Liverpool; and President of the Lancashire Sugar Refiners' Association).

I have taken very great interest in the possibility of the cultivation of beet in this country for the purpose of sugar for a great many years, and by means of experimental plots all over the country—it has been proved beyond dispute, at any rate to my satisfaction, that there is nothing in the world to prevent beet root being produced in this country as rich in saccharin as on the Continent. The difficulty with regard to that seems to me to be to get anybody to cultivate a sufficiently large area in the immediate neighbourhood of the factory. It is no use having small factories. They will not pay anywhere, and the difficulty of getting farmers to cultivate 5,000 acres at least within a radius of 2 or 3 miles of a factory is very great. 100,000 tons should be the minimum of a factory, and twice that would be better. For the proper economical handling of that beet a long cartage distance would not do. In some districts of England, 5,000 acres could be grown within a radius of 4 miles of a factory. The greatest difficulty in connection with this question is the want of confidence on the part of capitalists in putting their money in the factory owing to the enormous start that the Continental industry has already obtained. That has been an objection which certainly has weighed very heavily upon capitalists until the Convention came into effect, because they never knew what price sugar would go to.

The putting of certain land in this country under sugar beet would tend very materially to increase the employment available for the population of the country districts. It would be one of the most important influences in taking labour back to the land, by giving almost continuous employment all through the year, because there is the field labour all through the spring and summer, and then there is the factory labour which runs almost for the remainder of the year. Practically the same hands would be employed in the factory as on the land. The campaign in a properly organised beet root factory ought to last for 90 days from about September.

The Government might very reasonably be called upon to make some grant to establish the sugar industry in this country. I should like to see the Government take it up. If the Government were to follow the lead of some of the Colonial Governments, and provide the money to put up these factories on co-operative lines, there would still be a difficulty in finding the farmers to provide the land and undertake to grow the beet,

Cultivation of Sugar
Beet.

1200

Increased Employ-
ment.

State Aid.

1201 State Aid
—continued.

because the British farmer is so thoroughly wedded to his old ways that he would be very unwilling to grow it. There is no sugar beet grown now in this country at all, and there has not been for 30 years. There was a factory at Lavenham in Suffolk 30 years ago. In the meantime the percentage of saccharin matter looked for in beet has increased very much, in those days about 12 % would be the maximum, and now 18 to 19 % is looked for.

Acreage Required.

Beet cannot be profitably grown as a farming venture on 50 acres, but it could on 1,000. Assuming there is a sufficient acreage, on the results obtained as to weight of the roots, and the proportion of saccharin contained in those roots, it could be grown to produce a profit, assuming the price to be 9s. or 10s. Beet seems to be a kind of plant that does not much care what sort of soil it grows in, but the soil in the neighbourhood of Magdeburg in Germany is suitable for it, and that is a light soil. Mr. Lawrence has grown it in the neighbourhood of Salisbury experimentally for many years, and has obtained very good results.

Scarcity of Labour
Hinders Beet
Growing.

With regard to Australia there was a beet root factory there some years ago, concerning which I had some particulars, and the trouble of growing beet root there certainly was due, and the same applies to America in the Western States, to scarcity of labour. Beet root requires an immense amount of labour. On the Continent a great deal of female labour and the labour of children is employed, which in these more modern countries is not available.

Rotation Crop.

1202

As to the beet crop taking anything out of the soil particularly, and the necessity for rotating the crops with any other special class of crops, I have heard from time to time that the crop in Germany was going to be good or bad, judged from the sales of nitrates, &c., to Germany, that if the Germans were buying nitrates we were going to have a good crop; if they were not buying nitrates, we were not going to have a good crop; but I do not know really whether it is so. In Magdeburg I believe they keep growing the crop on the same land. And in France, year after year, you see the beet root crop grown on the same land, at all events it gives that impression, but the French fields that one sees are so small that they might be rotated in very small compartments. It is properly a rotation crop, and it prepares for a barley crop, &c. I am not an agriculturalist, and though I have some knowledge, it is only a superficial knowledge of the conditions under which beet root is grown.

Beet Waste as
Cattle Food.

I went over a beet root farm near Buda Pesth where they had two stables, in one of which they had 250 milch cows that were fed chiefly on the beet root residue—they sent milk into Buda Pesth three times a day—and in another shed they had about 300 oxen fattening. The residue can be kept good, and cattle fed all the year round with it; by drying it in a rotary apparatus, the moisture is driven off, and then it will keep for an indefinite period. It is dried in the same way that brewers' grains are dried.

1203

1204

SECTION IV.—FORMS OF INQUIRY.

Form No. 5
(Agriculture).

1205

FORM No. 5.—AGRICULTURE.

7, VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, S.W.,

May, 1904.

DEAR SIR,—I am desired by the Agricultural Committee to ask you to assist the Inquiry they have undertaken by answering the questions on the enclosed form. The questions have been framed with the view of obtaining the information necessary to supplement that which has been obtained from official returns, and to form a basis for the examination of representative Witnesses.

Copies of the enclosed form are being sent to Agriculturists throughout the country. When the answers are received, the information so obtained will be tabulated in the Offices of the Commission.

You will see that it is not necessary for the purposes of the Inquiry that your name should be disclosed, and the fact that you have given information will be regarded as strictly confidential if you so desire.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. S. HEWINS, Secretary to the Commission.

1206

1.—What is the acreage of your occupation, and how long have you held it?

Acreage

Years of occupation

2.—Is yours an arable, a grass or a mixed farm, and, if the latter, about in what proportions?

Description of Farm.

Proportion.

And what has been the principal items of your produce during recent years?

Produce.

Percentage of Acreage.

3.—Has your acreage under arable cultivation decreased or increased during recent years?

And if there has been any change in the character of your cultivation, what is the nature of the change and what was the reason for making it?

4.—How much of the land in your occupation is adapted for the growth of wheat, barley, or oats? And at what prices respectively would it pay to grow each of these cereals on this land?

1207

					Acreage.	Price.
Wheat	...	...	...	...		
Barley	...	...	...	...		
Oats	...	...	...	...		

5.—How is your principal produce disposed of?

Description of Produce.	Market.	Distance of your farm from market, in miles.	Railway rate from nearest station to market.

1208

6.—Has any progress been made in your district in the adoption of co-operative methods in regard to the purchase of materials and the marketing of produce? Please give any details you can.

7.—What was the original cost and description of the implements and machinery used on your farm?

Implements and Machinery.	Original Cost.

8.—Speaking generally, what is your experience of the advantage of British-made as compared with imported agricultural and dairying machinery, as regards—(a) price; (b) wearing qualities; (c) general usefulness.

9.—The duty on corn, suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, is as follows: a 2s. per quarter duty on corn, except maize, with a corresponding duty on flour, giving a substantial preference to the miller, Colonial corn being admitted free.

How far, in your opinion, is this proposal calculated to be of assistance or benefit to you in the branches of agricultural industry in which you are engaged?

NM

10.—The duty suggested on meat and dairy produce is 5 %, Colonial produce of the same kind again being free. How far are these duties likely to benefit you in the branches of industry in which you are engaged ?

11.—Are you in favour of any distinction being made between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat, and, if so, on what grounds ?

12.—Please state whether you would be willing to furnish to the Committee any further detailed information, and, if so, on what subjects ?

Name

Postal Address

County

(Before signing, see below.)

If you wish the fact that you have furnished the Commission with the foregoing information to be considered as confidential, please sign here only, and not on preceding page. In that case this page, bearing the name of your firm, will be torn off and filed as soon as the form is returned to the offices of the Commission.

Name

Postal Address

County

The following Forms of Inquiry have also been issued in cases where Form No. 5 did not apply.

Form No. 1
(Manufacturers).

FORM NO. 1.—MANUFACTURERS.

(Accompanied with a letter and instructions similar in terms to No. 5.)

1.—State the nature of your trade or trades, and whether your sales are for the (a) home, (b) foreign ^{and} or (c) the Colonial markets :—

2.—What was the weekly average number of persons employed by you during 1903, distinguishing, if possible, men from women and children ?

Men.	Women and Children.	Total.
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3.—What are the principal articles that you manufacture for the home trade in respect to which you experience foreign competition ?

4.—Are any articles similar to those manufactured by you imported into this country below your cost price ? If so, please state particulars as far as you can.

Country of Origin.	Description of Articles.
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5.—Have you any information leading you to conclude that such imported articles are placed upon the British market at or below the normal cost of production in the country of origin ? If so, please state particulars as far as you can.

6.—Is your trade subject to adverse competition from foreign countries in consequence of any difference in the rates of wages, in the hours of labour, or in other respects ? If so, please give such particulars as you can.

7.—Has your export trade suffered in recent years by the operations of the tariff of any country ? If so, please state your experience.

8.—What amount of reduction of the tariff of any country would enable you to compete successfully within that country with commodities made therein similar to those you manufacture ?

Description of Commodity.	Country.	Present Tariff.	Suggested Reduction.
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9.—What is your experience in respect of foreign competition in the Colonies in your trade ?

10.—Do you suffer any disadvantages from the operations of the Patent Laws or Registration Laws in other countries ? If so, please state particulars.

11.—Please state whether you would be willing to furnish to the Commission any further detailed information, and, if so, on what subjects ?

Name of Firm (to be signed by authorised Representative)—*

Address

(Before signing, see next page.)

* Confidential signature, if desired, as in the case of No. 5.

Form No. 2
(Merchants).

FORM NO. 2.—MERCHANTS.

(Accompanied with a letter and instructions similar in terms to No. 5.)

1.—What are the principal goods in which you deal ?

2.—If you are an importer, please state the principal goods you import, and from what countries ?

3.—If you are an exporter, please state the principal goods you export, and to what countries ?

4.—What is the approximate percentage, by value, of your total turnover for the year 1903, which is—

Approximate
Percentage.

- (a) Imported by you and sold in the United Kingdom ?
(b) Imported by you and subsequently sent abroad ?
(c) Obtained by you in the United Kingdom and sold there ?
(d) Obtained by you in the United Kingdom and sent abroad ?

5.—If these proportions show considerable variations in recent years, please give details and explanations.

6.—What proportion, if any, of your total exports is directed to British possessions, and if this part of your trade is increasing or diminishing, please give details and explanations.

7.—What proportion, if any, of your total imports comes from British possessions, and if this part of your trade is increasing or diminishing, please give details and explanations.

8.—Is the proportion of foreign-made goods to British-made goods in any branch of your trade increasing or diminishing ? If so, please say to what extent, and give reasons for the change, if you can.

9.—Please give any instances of loss or partial loss of any foreign markets through the operation of foreign tariffs and regulations.

10.—What general conclusions have you arrived at as to the effect of the Customs Regulations and Tariffs of the foreign countries with which your principal trade is carried on ?

11.—What is your experience of the effect of Preferential Tariffs—(a) Colonial, (b) other ?

12.—What is your practical business experience as to the working and value of the most-favoured-nation clause in regard to your industry ?

13.—Has the growth of combinations in the United States, Germany, and other foreign countries affected your business either at home or abroad, and, if so, in what manner ?

14.—Is it within your experience that foreign traders are injuring your trade by disposing of their goods in any of your markets at a less price than they obtain for similar goods in their home markets ? If so, please give particulars as far as you can.

15.—Please give any information you have showing the effect on your trade of the differentiation in foreign countries of railway rates and shipping charges on goods exported to the United Kingdom, or other countries ?

16.—Has there been any change in recent years in the proportion of your exports of semi-manufactured to fully-manufactured goods, and to what reasons do you attribute any change that has occurred ?

Name of Firm (to be signed by authorised Representative)—*

Address

(Before signing, see next page.)

* Confidential signature, if desired, as in the case of No. 5.

FORM No. 8.

(Accompanied with a letter and instructions similar in terms to No. 5).

Form No. 8
(General.)

1.—What was the approximate percentage of your total annual sales during each of the following five years for the (a) home, (b) foreign ^{and} or (c) Colonial markets respectively ?

Year.	Percentage.		
	Home and Shippers.	Foreign (Direct).	Colonial (Direct).
1899			
1900			
1901			
1902			
1903			

*2.—If you have no objection, please state the value of your total annual sales for the last year or for each of the following five years:—

Year.	Total Sales.		
	£	s.	d.
1899			
1900			
1901			
1902			
1903			

* The Commission considers this question of great importance with a view to estimating the relation between the production for the home and export trades. Manufacturers are reminded that the fact that they have furnished this information will be considered as strictly confidential, and no use will be made of it which will enable Commissioners or others to trace its source.

3.—Give particulars of the principal supplies of the materials, raw and partly manufactured, used in your industry in 1903, and state from what countries they are derived.

Description of Materials.	Value and Quantity.	Present Country of Origin.
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4.—State if any of the above-mentioned materials, now imported from foreign countries, were formerly obtained in the United Kingdom, and, if so, what has caused the change.

5.—Please state whether you do your export trade direct or through merchants.

6.—What were the total payments in 1903 by your firm on account of (a) wages, (b) local rates, (c) coal, other fuel and motive power.

	Amount.
Wages	
Local Rates	
Coal, other Fuel or Motive Power	

7.—If you can do so, please give definite information as to the burden of local rates upon businesses similar to your own in competing foreign countries as compared with the local rates current in your district.

8.—What minimum duties, if any, on the articles imported, similar to those you manufacture, do you suggest as sufficient to safeguard the interests of your trade?

Description of Articles.	Suggested Duty.
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9.—If such duties were imposed, what, in your opinion, would be the effect (a) upon prices in the Home Market, (b) in securing greater continuity and security in the Home Trade, (c) in reducing cost of production, (d) in increasing employment, and (e) in increasing wages?

10.—Taking 1903 as an example, can you give any particulars and figures as to the loss of employment in your establishment due to the importation of goods you could have manufactured?

11.—Do you think that, in the interests of your trade, special measures are required to prevent the importation of foreign manufactures below cost price in the country of origin; and, if so, of what character should such measures be?

12.—Have the trades similar to yours in Germany, the United States, Belgium or other foreign countries, made any inroads on any markets, hitherto largely supplied from the United Kingdom, in any branch of business in which you are engaged? Give such particulars as you can.

13.—What is your experience with regard to the effect of Colonial or other Preferential Tariffs? If benefit has arisen to your trade, please give specific details and illustrations.

If there are any points not dealt with in the foregoing questions which you would desire to bring to the notice of the Commission, please give the details on this sheet.

Name of Firm (to be signed by authorised Representative)—*

Address

* Confidential signature, if desired, as in the case of No. 5.

**Agricultural
Districts.**

For the purpose of this Report the United Kingdom is divided into eight districts (as adopted by the Board of Agriculture), England consisting of four, Scotland of two, Wales and Ireland of one each.

Division I.—Bedford, Cambridge, Essex, Hertford, Huntingdon, Lincoln, London, Middlesex, Norfolk, Suffolk, York (East Riding).

Division II.—Berks., Buckingham, Hants, Kent, Leicester, Northampton, Notts., Oxford, Rutland, Surrey, Sussex, Warwick.

Division III.—Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucester, Hereford, Monmouth, Salop, Somerset, Wilts., Worcester.

Division IV.—Chester, Cumberland, Derby, Durham, Lancaster, Northumberland, Stafford, Westmoreland, York (North Riding), York (West Riding).

Division V.—Wales.

Division VI.—Aberdeen, Banff, Berwick, Clackmannan, Edinburgh, Elgin (or Moray), Fife, Forfar, Haddington, Kincardine, Kinross, Linlithgow, Nairn, Peebles, Perth, Roxburgh, Selkirk.

Division VII.—Argyll, Ayr, Bute, Caithness, Dumbarton, Inverness, Kirkcudbright, Lanark, Orkney, Renfrew, Ross and Cromarty, Shetland, Stirling, Sutherland, Wigtown.

Division VIII.—Ireland.

SECTION V.—REPLIES TO FORMS OF INQUIRY.

1221

(A) CONDITIONS WITH REGARD TO CULTIVATION.

Conditions with
regard to Cultivation.

QUESTION 3 (FORM V.): *Has your acreage under arable cultivation decreased or increased during recent years? And if there has been any change in the character of your cultivation, what is the nature of the change and what was the reason for making it?*

The replies received to this question from farmers in all the 8 districts of the United Kingdom numbered 867, of whom 50 report an increase in their arable cultivation, 505 report a decrease, and 312 report no change in this respect. The replies in each class are sufficiently similar in character to permit of the following summary statement of some of the leading causes of change.

In Division I (Eastern and North Eastern England) the area of arable land has decreased nearly half a million acres in the past 30 years, and the area of permanent pasture has increased more than half a million acres. Wheat is regarded by many farmers in this division as the "natural cereal" to grow on much of their land, but the opinion is widely held that it "does not pay for cultivation at present prices." Green crops are spoken of as replacing corn in many instances and wheat is often grown for the straw rather than for direct profit. The difficulty of securing adequate farm labour at wages that the land can bear at present corn prices is also dwelt upon. The following illustrative answers may be quoted:—

Eastern and North
Eastern England.

1222

D. COOK, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE; Yeoman.

Several hundred acres of the best wheat-growing land in our neighbourhood have of late years been laid down to pasture, and many acres have run out of cultivation and been practically starved. People went off the land because the farmers could not make sufficient of their produce to employ them. There is a change in the character of our cultivation, as we have been unable to get suitable men and no boys. We have gone in for implements of modern make, to save the expense of labour.

A. W. MERRY, F.S.I., LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE; Land Agent, Surveyor and Auctioneer.

My experience is that the cultivated area gets less and less, and that the arable land is not cultivated so well as formerly on a great number of farms. The flock of sheep went in the early years of depression, and have never returned. In one parish I have in my mind comprising 5 farms, there is only 1 flock of sheep, and this is not an isolated case.

E. SNELL, NETTLESTEAD HALL, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

The low price of corn has obliged us to decrease our arable cultivation, because the actual cultivation expenses come to more than the crop in most cases, more especially wheat. By allowing much of our poorer heavy land to remain still, after sowing it down to mixed grasses, we avoid horse and manual labour upon it so long as it remains. The produce of such land is simply nothing, worth but little for either grazing or mowing, but as there is no expense upon it, the loss is of course only small. In former days, on most of the lands wheat might be reasonably supposed to average 8 or 9 sacks an acre, that is provided it underwent good and careful husbandry. The simple change therefore is, we prefer land to remain uncultivated, rather than incur loss through labour expenses and so low a price for produce.

1223

W. J. BURGESS, STOW, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK; Auctioneer, Valuer and Land Agent.

Decreased, especially in the last 2 years. Wheat has been steadily going out of rotation—did not pay for cultivation. 20 years ago it was 30 % on my arable land, now it is only 3. Mixed seeds, 1, 2 or 3 years' ley has increased. Barley and oats about the same. Potatoes, carrots and mustard slightly decreased.

M. W. MORTIMER, ESTATE OFFICE, CULFORD, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

It has remained about the same; perhaps about 70 more acres than formerly have been devoted to temporary pastures, instead of corn cultivation. Wheat has decreased, as I cannot grow it profitably. Barley has also decreased slightly, to make room for increased oats and green crops. I grow about 600 acres of roots every year, about 500 acres seeds, &c., and remainder corn crops. I am increasing the amount of oats, as there is a special local demand for good oats. I have increased my acreage of lucerne in the past 2 years for making hay as well as for feeding green, and find that on this light, sandy soil lucerne and sanfoin are two of the best crops to grow. Wheat I grow in small quantities—about 120 acres every year.

1224

In Division II. (South Eastern and East Midland England) about one million acres, formerly under arable cultivation, have been let down to pasture in the last 30 years for much the same reasons as apply to Division I. The following illustrative replies may be quoted:—

South Eastern and
East Midland
England.

F. E. & J. TAYLOR, HERMITAGE, NEWBURY, BERKS.; Farmers.

The arable acreage has decreased considerably; we have laid down 100 acres to pasture recently. As corn growing has become so unprofitable and labour scarce, we have grown a much greater proportion of grass and sanfoins to diminish working expenses.

ALDERMAN J. T. HARRISON, J.P., THE POPLARS, BUCKINGHAM; Farmer.

Decreased. Began about $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$, but on leaving had laid down a considerable acreage. Increased cost of labour and decreased value of produce. I have sold wheat in the 10 years from 1864 to 1874 frequently at over 70s. per quarter, which enabled me to pay 2 years' rent and cultivate on the fallows prior to wheat planting. Now wheat is grown at a loss, and only as a necessity to get straw for thatching.

1233 **Conditions with
regard to Cultivation**
—continued

W. F. BELL, LUTHRIE BANK, CUPAR, FIFESHIRE ; Farmer.

Decreased. Put best arable farm into grass. Low prices of produce caused by unfair competition of foreign competitors.

R. S. GIBB, LAUDER, N.B. ; Farmer.

At present 5 teams or pairs of horses employed for draught work ; prior to 1880, 9 ; from 1880 to 1890, 6. For future purpose employing only 4. Character of change as above. Reasons : (1) Labour scarce and dear, owing to rural depopulation ; (2) It is impossible now to get cheap light labour done by children—as they cannot be employed under 14—except very occasionally ; (3) The excess to which education is now carried has given a distaste to most forms of farm work, even though wages are about 20s. per week with free house and large garden ; (4) The very low prices for all classes of produce from cultivated land and the uncertainty of profit from the increase of stock fostered by cultivation.

J. LYON, ROTHESAY, BUTE ; Farmer.

Decreased. At one time I grew wheat, barley, oats, but now I only grow oats as I cannot profitably grow the other crops named.

WILLIAM DUTHIE, TARVES, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

About the same. I have changed from a 5-course rotation to a 6-course, letting the land lie under pasture for a year or more, to prevent "finger and toe" in the turnip crop.

J. MILNE, INVERURIE, ABERDEEN ; Farmer.

No material change on this farm. There is a general tendency in the district to let the land lie longer in grass. No material change, except that wheat, of which about 20 acres were grown previous to 1887, is now omitted owing to fall in price.

D. CUNNINGHAM, DALACHY, ABERDOUB, FIFESHIRE ; Farmer.

Remained much the same. I can see no profitable way of changing it for the better, as I grow all the different varieties of grains and grain crops on the arable portion of the farm, but on the pastoral division I do differently from most men, as I rear on it all the cattle and sheep I feed, so that I do not need to bother about the Canadian or Irish stores, and I am convinced on many secondary holdings it would pay others to do likewise.

W. SCOTT, ORCHARD, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

Have cultivated nearly the same all my occupancy. Used to grow wheat, and gave that up owing more to the price of the straw getting lowered owing to arrivals of Dutch and French, than to the fall in prices of wheat.

1235

Ireland.

In Ireland (Division VII.) about half a million acres of arable land have been let down to pasture during the last 30 years. The replies of some of the Antrim farmers note the recent adoption of more "intensive" methods of cultivation, it being found that the use of chemical fertilisers led to heavier and more profitable crops. Farms which were largely under tillage have now been given over almost entirely to grazing, but the margin of profit between the prices of store cattle and fat cattle is spoken of as discouragingly small in many cases. There is a widespread complaint of the scarcity of efficient labour, though this scarcity has been in a measure mitigated by the more extensive use of agricultural machinery. In some of the answers flax is spoken of as an unprofitable crop "owing to lower prices and increase in working expenses." The following are illustrative replies :—

J. KAVANAGH, BALLINGLEN, RATHDEUM, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

Owing to dear labour and unremunerative prices for agricultural produce it has decreased. There is a considerable change even in the last 17 years. The rearing of wheat and oats, and dairying formed the staple industry of this country, along with the pig trade. Now wheat is not sown at all, the butter trade is a thing of the past, and the pig trade is going from bad to worse year by year. Sheep and cattle are the only things we have had to live out of for some years back. The reason for this is not far to seek :—free trade, dear labour, and excessive railway rates.

1236

G. L. BOMFORD (ASSISTANT LAND COMMISSIONER), OAKLEY PARK, KELLS, CO. MEATH ; Farmer.

Increased, but not with the idea of making a profit from the sale of the crops so raised, but for winter feeding. I have tilled considerably more land during the last few years, because I found my land was running greatly to moss when left long in pasture, and I could make a greater profit by winter feeding than by summer grazing.

H. KIDD, ARLES, CO. CARLOW ; Farmer.

Decreased. I used to grow a great deal of wheat, but of late years it cannot be grown at a profit, so had to lay down most of the land. Any corn I grow now is partly for home use, and to keep the land in a proper system of rotation. All the farm has been in pasture for 25 years and upwards, except 2 fields I keep in tillage.

T. FROST, SIX MILE BRIDGE, CLARE ; Farmer.

Decreased. I grew wheat formerly at a remunerative price and also barley. I had to give both up, having no market. It's begging we have to go with our sample of wheat in the city of Limerick to get a buyer ; same for barley. I may add, I could not lift malting barley on my land.

F. R. JACKSON, KILKEA HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

1237

Decreased. I have tilled less in recent years, as I found after paying rent, labour, seed, manures, and keep of horses, that my profit on produce of tillage was almost nil. Fattening cattle, for which object I grow turnips, leaves no profit of late years ; good store cattle cost from 27s. to 30s. per cwt. live weight, and when finished beef they are worth only from 29s. to 31s. per cwt. live weight.

W. FENNEL, RATHSIDE, BALLYTORE, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

Decreased, yes, and I would not till an acre under existing circumstances were it not that a good deal of the poorer part of my land does not lend itself to permanent pasture. The day for profitable corn growing in heavy land, owing to foreign competition and scarcity of hands, and dearth of wages, &c., &c., and the thousand and one changes of a tillage farm, is over. The only chance now is to work a tillage farm in conjunction with a grass farm, and expect the profit from the young cattle and sheep reared and fattened.

COL. R. G. COSEY, J.P., D.L., STRADBALLY HALL, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

Decreased year by year. Laying down to grass. Because tillage did not pay, in consequence of the foreign importation of meat, cattle, flour, wheat, oats, and barley, and butter and wool, and the increasing price of labour.

T. W. WEBBER, KELLYVILLE, ATHY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

1238

Diminished considerably ; since the fall in price of cereals the acreage under barley and oats has diminished, and wheat is no longer sown in this district. The above diminution is due to low prices. About the year 1880 prices were :—

					s.	d.		s.	d.		s.	d.
Barley	..	..	..	..	22	0	per barrel now	14	9	to	10	0
Oats	..	..	..	..	17	0	" "	12	0	"	8	0
Wheat	..	..	..	..	30	0	" "	18	0	"		
Beef	..	..	..	..	80	0	" cwt.	50	0	"	40	0
Mutton	..	..	..	..	0	10	" lb.	0	7	"	0	5
Wool	..	..	..	..	1	6	" "	0	10	"	0	5½

If 1s. per stone were secure, farmers would double their area under cereals, but at present, when the first buying is over (of barley at 14s. 9d.), the price usually falls to 10s. and 12s.

W. YOUNG, D.L., BROCKLEY PARK, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

Decreased greatly. I formerly had nearly ½ my farm in tillage—say an average of 180 acres—and now I have only 60 acres. The reasons for the above change are :—(1) The fall in prices of barley and oats, and especially wheat. (2) The scarcity of labour, and the deterioration of the quality of labour and the rise in wages. I formerly always got about 40s. per qr. for my barley, now 29s. to 30s. is the top price. My land grows good malting barley, but the change made by Mr. Gladstone in levying the duty on beer instead of on malt has encouraged the use of light foreign barley and other substances, and reduced the price of Irish barley by 30 %. Wheat being now less than half the price it was in the seventies, can only be grown where a good market for wheaten straw exists.

1239

J. MARK, MYROE, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

It has rather decreased, but not as much as in some quarters. We endeavour to hold on to mixed husbandry as well as we can. We have ceased to grow wheat and barley for which these lands are peculiarly adapted, because they become unprofitable to grow ; the prices are bad and sometimes the article hard to sell at any price.

G. W. BIGGS, BELLEVUE, BORRISOKANE, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

Formerly, about 25 years ago, when barley and wheat fetched big prices, my father had 3 times the land under cultivation ; now we find it better to cultivate only what is absolutely necessary for cattle and horses, as the labour bill has increased, while prices have decreased. Wheat sowing has quite disappeared from this locality, owing to falling off of prices. Amongst the smaller farmers, barley has been their chief crop year after year, consequently their ground must be entirely exhausted of its barley-producing properties.

1240

(B) AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS.

QUESTION 8 (FORM V.) :—*Speaking generally, what is your experience of the advantage of British-made as compared with imported agricultural and dairying machinery, as regards (a) Price ; (b) Wearing qualities ; (c) General usefulness.*

Of the farmers replying to this question from all parts of the United Kingdom 321 declare a preference for British-made machinery ; 166 prefer Canadian and foreign-made machinery, and 130 say they have no preference in the matter. The British-made machinery is generally spoken of as " best for wearing qualities and finish " and better adapted for British soils and crops, although they may involve a little greater outlay at the start. " We are certainly indebted," says an Elgin farmer, " to the Americans for introducing well and lightly-got-up machinery, but for durability and general usefulness the British-made are most in favour." An Irish farmer makes this comment : " I mow my corn by a non-binder, as I find I have enough men to bind by hand. Also I hire a steam thresher to thresh my corn at £2 per day. The difference of 10 % put on prices of American implements would not seriously hamper farmers, as the competition of British-made machines would still keep down prices. . . . British are the best. Americans who dump implements will raise their prices when they secure the market."

Agricultural
Machinery and
Implements :
British and
Imported.

1241 **Agricultural
Machinery and
Implements :
British and
Imported**
—continued.

Testimony is borne to the progress made in British-made machinery in recent years. An Irish farmer says:—"My objections to English and Scotch-made implements were that they were unnecessarily weighty in construction and heavy of draught. The introduction of American-made reapers and mowers has changed all this, and for simplicity of design and excellence of material, the home-made article is if anything superior." Also a Hampshire farmer remarks:—"Certainly Canadian binders and cultivators are very compact and of light construction, but as regards ploughs, harrows, rakes and mowers, I give English make the preference, but of late years the English manufacturers have made great improvements in this respect. The English steam engines, threshing machines, and chaff cutters are the best, I have seen nothing to equal them."

Comparative Prices.

The following comparison is made of the prices at which American as compared to English-made machines are sold in the North of Ireland:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
" American reaper and mower combined ..	12	10	0	English do.	13	0	0
" Mower	10	15	0	" "	11	10	0
" Binders	27	10	0	" "	30	0	0
" Spring harrows	3	10	0	" "	3	10	0
" Small tools—grapes	0	2	0	" "	0	2	0
" Small tools—shovels	0	1	9	" "	0	1	9
" Horse rakes	5	10	0	" "	7	10	0
" Hay tedders	7	15	0	" "	8	15	0

"Although in some cases the price varies, the quality and efficiency is often greater than the difference in price would represent, but the differences noted are in the best articles of both countries' make." In a footnote it is added that since this table was completed all implements have become somewhat cheaper. A Norfolk farmer suggests that if British firms would sell direct to farmers instead of through agents "they could easily compete with the foreigner."

SIR R. NIGEL F. KINGSCOTE, G.C.V.O., &C., KINGSCOTE, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE, R.S.O., GLOS.

Sundry Experiences.

(a) Cheaper. Agricultural implements are much cheaper and better now than they were 40, or even 20 years since, the British implement makers having learnt much from American, Canadian and other makers. I have only experience of ploughs and horse rakes in imported machinery. The ploughs are the best I have ever used and wear well, costing much less for repairs than any English-made plough I have used. The horse rakes do not wear anything like so well as those manufactured in Britain, but they are very much lighter and more work can be done with them. I prefer them to the British-made rake.

D. A. SPENCE, DUNNINALD MAINS, MONTROSE, FORFARSHIRE; Farmer.

The usual implements for the district. Steam engines, gas engines, water power, threshing machines, grinding machines, saw bench, &c. We reckon that for our land it requires about £13 per acre to stock a farm with everything. As near as I can calculate about £2 per acre would be about the price of implements. Home-made are generally a little higher in price. They are, as a rule, rather heavier in build, being stronger and heavier stand more rough usage, but I consider the foreign equally as good for wearing qualities. I find the workmen if possible always prefer to work the foreign machines, and this is, I think, because they are easier handled, and lifted and turned. These remarks refer to the heavier implements and machines; for the smaller tools, grapes, hoes, &c., the American is far the best maker, and our workmen will scarcely touch a Scotch or English-made tool. This is simply because we make them so heavy and clumsy.

C. M. BRUCE, FOREES, N.B.; Farmer.

My experience of above is mostly gathered when in estate management, &c., in Greece and in Egypt, and is as follows:—(a) Price or initial cost of British-made agricultural implements and machinery was greater than that of other countries as a rule. But it often happened that pieces of foreign stuffs needed some attention before going into regular use, thus increasing cost. (b) Wearing qualities of British make invariably better; there being generally more weight in them, and finer fitting of joints, bolts, &c. (c) The general usefulness of the foreign was often equal to and sometimes superior to the British, on account of their lightness suiting the local requirements and lighter teams of the peasantry.

(c) Co-OPERATION AND MARKET ORGANISATION.

1243

**Co-operation and
Market Organisation.**

QUESTION 6 (FORM V.): *Has any progress been made in your district in the adoption of co-operative methods in regard to the purchase of materials and the marketing of produce? Please give any details you can.*

The replies to this question from various parts of the United Kingdom number 835. Only a rough division of the replies is possible and this indicates that co-operation in some form or other exists in the districts of 283 of the farmers replying; 75 report that little progress in co-operation has been made in their districts; 437 report that there is no co-operation in their districts; and 40 declare that co-operation has proved a failure with them.

Instances of Success.

A large number of the affirmative answers come from Irish districts in which the Irish Agricultural Organisation scheme has been in operation in recent years. Many cases of success are given from various parts of England in the purchase of manures, feeding stuffs and seeds, and, in a lesser degree, of implements and agricultural machinery; and also in the sale of milk, butter, eggs and poultry.

Norfolk and Lincolnshire farmers indicate the benefits arising from the operations of such bodies as the West Norfolk Farmers' Manure and Chemical Company, through which it is said "several hundreds of farmers can obtain guaranteed manures at a reasonable price. . . . The Board of Directors consists of farmers chosen by shareholders who are principally farmers themselves, and the products are sold at prices which only allow 6% interest on invested capital. All business is done directly with the managing director, no agents

1244

or travellers being employed. All soils are analysed free of cost to customers and the necessary fertilisers in which each soil is deficient is recommended." The Lincolnshire Association started 30 years ago or more is said to have done "an immense amount of good by keeping prices of superphosphate at a reasonable amount. The Association buys artificial manures for its members, and charges them at cost price, with the addition of 1s. per ton as registration fee for expenses." These co-operative efforts are spoken of as "an inestimable boon to farmers in supplying manures at reasonable rates with guaranteed analyses."

Many farmers speak of beneficial results in the West Country. The Western Counties' Agricultural Co-operative Association, Ltd., with headquarters at Plymouth and Bristol, is said to supply "most agricultural requisites and has always paid 5 % on shares and a good bonus on purchases." A Monmouthshire farmer gives the following experience:—"I have derived great benefit from membership of the Western Counties' Agricultural Association, headquarters at Plymouth, with branches at Bristol and elsewhere, through which I have obtained valuable discount off machinery purchased through them, and in purchasing food stuffs, seeds and manures from the stores of the Association I can depend on value for the money laid out, with protection against adulteration and fraud, by the system of analysis of all foods supplied; and in addition I have received annually bonuses of from 4d. to 6d. in the £ on my expenditure as well as 5 % on my share capital."

On the other hand two Wiltshire farmers report:—

"We carried on for 15 years a co-operative business turning from £30,000 to £40,000 a year, but owing to farmers being so short of money it fell through; through this association practically all the requirements of a farmer could be bought at a considerable saving."

"The South Western Farmers' Association, 41, Castle Street, Salisbury, a combination of farmers (qualified as members by a £1 share) for the purchase of feeding stuffs, seeds, implements and general farm requisites in large quantities and distribution to members at a small commission sufficient to cover cost, and a slight margin over, and also for the sale of members' produce, was started in 1889, and continued until 1904, and until the last 3 years very successfully, with an annual average turnover of £35,000 and a total paid-up capital of under £1,000; but since 1901 some losses having been made, the capital could not stand this, it was decided to go into voluntary liquidation, which I anticipate will be a great loss to agriculture in this district, as this Association was of great benefit to farmers, both members and those outside it. There is also the Western Counties' Agricultural Co-operative Association, Ltd., with an authorised capital of £50,000 in 10,000 £5 shares, of which £3 per share has been called up, and whose shares are at a premium, and is working somewhat on the lines of the S.W.F.A., but with a much more adequate capital."

Another unfavourable report comes from Warwickshire:—

"Some farmers deal largely with the Western Farmers' Supply, others order manures and feeding stuffs through the Warwickshire Farmers' Association. Those giving small orders get some benefit, but a 20-ton order for cash in a month can be obtained as cheaply and as well guaranteed for purity by an individual as by co-operation. I have purchased superphosphate of lime by private tender from good firms for many years, and have never heard of any association buying or selling at a lower price for same quality. I do not believe in co-operation for marketing produce except by establishment of dairy fixtures, and these must be managed with extreme diligence and economy to prevent failure."

"A creamery was equipped and carried on by Lord Hertford, the landlord, and myself for 10 years in Alcester, 1890-1900, which purchased the milk from several farms round and distributed about £1,000 per annum in cash, but was given up because it was found it could not be made to pay any interest on the outlay and at the same time give any advantage to farmers over the prices they would obtain in Birmingham and other local markets. I consider the distribution of Irish butter in England by means of the Maypole and other companies has reduced the price of first-rate English farmers' butter quite 2d. per lb., which is the direct result of the great co-operative dairy movement in Ireland."

"In Worcestershire co-operation was introduced by the Agricultural Organisation Society in October, 1901. The co-operative societies which now exist in this neighbourhood are: The Forest Supply Association, Ltd., Vicar's Farm, Ltd., Far Forest Pure Water Supply Association, Ltd., Bewdley Agricultural Supply Association, Ltd., Studley Castle Agricultural Supply Association, Ltd., the Evesham Growers' Association, Ltd., the Beckford Farmers' Association, Ltd., and in course of formation, the Toddington, Winchcombe and Studley Agricultural Association, Ltd., and the Winchcombe Auction Market, Ltd. These associations have all proved satisfactory, and the feeling is very rapidly growing that co-operation in farming is going to be an important factor."

The cost of artificial manures is said in some cases to have reduced by co-operation "from £1 to £2 per ton from prices charged before the movement was started. Seeds at least 50 % better and not any dearer; cost of freight also reduced, owing to large quantities arriving at the same time; feeding stuffs to the small consumer better and cheaper."

A few instances are given of successful co-operation for the sale of produce, but this is generally left to individual effort. "I would," says a Lincolnshire farmer, "rather rely on my own judgment than leave my produce in the hands of any co-operative managers to make a further charge on my burdens." "As soon," says a Suffolk farmer, "as I am incapable of purchasing my requirements myself and selling my produce, I will let the land to somebody else. I do not require highly-paid officials to make my bargains."

Co-operation is spoken of in many of the replies as more suited to districts where holdings are small and at a distance from large towns. Large buyers prepared to pay cash claim to get as good terms as the merchant or co-operative society. Many farmers find it best suits them "to buy from merchants who give them credit for a few months until their crops and cattle are realised and they are in funds. They prefer to pay a little more and get time for payment."

Instances of
Comparative Failure.

1246

1247

Other Experiences.

1248

There are also difficulties arising from prejudice and ignorance. "It would," says a Norfolk farmer, "take a famine or a flood to make the farmers combine." Says a Sussex farmer:—"The farmers of this district are too ignorant and in too backward and hopeless a state to be capable of co-operation without extraneous help in this direction. It requires organising ability in someone who has their interests at heart. At present, if they have anything to sell, they have to take what the middleman will give them." "The farmers in this neighbourhood," says a Somerset farmer, "are far too jealous of each other to adopt any co-operative system, and are under the mistaken impression they can do better single-handed."

A Lincolnshire grazier and auctioneer notes:—"I am afraid this district has yet much to learn as to co-operative methods; Individualism has obtained, and not Collectivism, as to the general system of farming and marketing. A new departure has lately been made in cattle breeding and marketing. A very strong committee has been formed at Alford (Market Town) to encourage the breeding of high class 'Lincoln Reds,' and the November Fair at Alford has been developed. Last year we sold about 130 young bulls there at excellent prices. This promises to be a great boon to this breeding and rearing district; already the Duke of Portland has promised to preside at our next sale, and prizes amounting to £70 will be given. We are not only looking for very beneficial results in this direction, but expect that this co-operative effort will teach the farmers of the district that their strength lies in united effort, and that the idea may spread to other departments of agriculture."

As to grain, a Hertfordshire farmer says:—"It is not possible to blend your own malting barley with other growers, nor could the markets be easily controlled; although this might answer very well in dairy produce, it would not work out in the disposal of grain."

Wales.

In Wales the co-operative movement is said to promise a general development. "A co-operative movement, initiated 2 years ago, has resulted in the formation of about 20 societies in the counties of Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, and some of the societies are doing a large trade already." The purchases take the form of seeds, artificial manures and feeding stuffs.

Scotland.

As to Scotland the benefits of co-operative methods are illustrated by a reference to "the 4 great stock counties of Perth, Forfar, Kincardine, and Aberdeen, where nearly all the auction marts are in the hands of farmers' companies. The shareholders receive fair interest on their capital, while the stock is sold at half the commission it is in the south of England." It is noted by Scotch farmers that "the Farmers' Supply Association of Scotland (15, Assembly Street, Leith) does a considerable business in supplying manures, seeds, feeding stuffs and all requirements at lowest wholesale prices to members. The Kelso Analytical Association is an important analytical society for testing seeds, manures, feeding stuffs, &c."

"For many years past 2 co-operative associations have been at work in the district; one with headquarters at Edinburgh, the other at Alnwick. But there has been little or no progress made of late years. Both associations assist farmers in purchasing manures, feeding stuffs, and seeds, but not in marketing farm produce. There is a great lack of the co-operative spirit amongst farmers. They seem unable to combine for any object; greatly to the loss of agriculture. No class suffers from so many disabilities and grievances, and from want of united action the influence they exert in the affairs of the country is nil. Hence the interests of agriculture have been sacrificed to those of the manufacturing and other classes of the community."

"We have," says a Selkirk farmer, "formed a Farmers' Supply Association. It has been of incalculable benefit to the community. Much more might be done in this way, but our people are difficult to move." Farmers' Supply Associations are reported as in operation in several Scotch counties.

Ireland.

The Irish replies are very numerous, and on the whole favourable to co-operation. Some illustrative replies may be quoted:—

"A creamery (co-operative) has been started half-a-mile from me (Co. Donegal), and seems to give satisfaction to all small farmers and especially to the women who escape the trouble of making butter."

"The only co-operative methods that have been adopted in this district (Kilkenny) are the dairy co-operative system. Some societies purchase at wholesale prices, seeds, manures, Indian meal, flour, bran, &c., and sometimes machinery, to be sold at the cost of carriage and working expenses to the suppliers and shareholders of the societies, which I consider a great advantage; but unfortunately, for want of capital, all the societies are not in a position to do this."

"Three years ago a co-operative dairy with capital of £1,500, building and machinery of most up-to-date character was erected on my property near Limavady railway station (Londonderry). It makes high-class butter, and there is a demand for more than can be supplied, chiefly in English market. The supply of milk is limited, as many of the farmers are still prejudiced in favour of making butter themselves, but this prejudice will soon die out. A co-operative society for purchase of eggs and poultry has also been formed in Limavady, and is doing very well."

"Practically none in marketing produce. The local agricultural co-operative society (Meath) started some years ago by the Hon. Horace Plunkett, is a great help, particularly to small purchasers. The only good in most cases that it does to persons in a position to take large quantities of cake, basic slag, or such goods, is to help them to make better bargains. I find for instance that by using it as a whip I can buy large quantities for cash a shade under the stores quotation. Implements, however, are as a rule considerably cheaper, and grass seeds very much cheaper, if bought through the society. The chief advantage of the society is in my opinion the benefit it gives to small purchasers, who get their 5 cwt., half ton or ton, as the case may be, at a reasonable price, and even more important, of best quality. These societies are of course unpopular with shopkeepers in the country towns, who have been in the habit of charging very high prices and giving long credit. Another advantage of the system is the habit it gets its customers into of paying cash for goods, and lets them see the additional value to be obtained in this way."

"A few years ago a number of co-operative creameries were started, and are succeeding very well. There are decreasing numbers of small farmers who have not joined, and who prefer the old methods. We have also co-operative societies to purchase feeding stuffs, artificial manure, seeds, &c. These are managed by committee,

and a secretary, who is paid a fixed salary. We have other co-operative societies for collecting eggs and fowls, which also are very largely supported by the community, but they are not much of a benefit to the country, as other merchants are giving as good or better prices."

"Yes, we formed an agricultural co-operative society; our society is going on well, we only trade in manures, seeds, and agricultural machinery. Our turnover now is £1,600 roughly, and increasing every year. Since these co-operative societies were started, prices of artificial manures have fallen greatly in the shops, nearly 15s. a ton. In spite of this fall in the price in the shops, our members save from 7 % to 10 % on the lowest shop prices, besides which the quality is guaranteed."

On the other hand:—

"Almost all the milk in this county (Limerick) is sent to the creameries, and a proportion of the separated milk is brought back for the calves; the farmers take back, as a rule, an insufficient quantity of separated milk, and the factory separated milk curdles very quickly in summer. The calves are deteriorating in every respect. Those who buy young cattle believe the factories to be the curse of the country."

"Except in creameries there has been nothing done within 10 miles (Tipperary). The produce of 10 creameries is sent from Laffansbridge station on my land to England. The creameries have made the farmers and their families lazy and good for nothing. In former years butter about here made in the farmhouses used to fetch first price in Cork, now they sell milk at an average of about 4d. a gallon which could not possibly pay, and they feed the calves on the wretched separated milk; the result is quite apparent in the miserable cattle."

(See also oral evidence of the Secretary of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Association, paragraph 720 onwards.)

Taking the replies as a whole, it is evident that there is a widespread desire for co-operative methods both for the purchase of materials and the marketing of produce. It is realised that "no amount of combination will entirely compensate for low prices." "Our markets," says a Hertfordshire farmer, "are so glutted by low-priced foreign goods that co-operative methods seem useless." But the general feeling is that by co-operation the ill effects of foreign competition may be mitigated. "The great want," says a Northampton farmer, "is a bacon factory, and an organisation for collecting and distributing butter, eggs, poultry, fruit and vegetables. There seems to be a grand opening for co-operation, but capital does not seem to be forthcoming to start the ball rolling. I am afraid it takes a lot to get farmers to unite for their mutual benefit. Shire horse societies are doing good, and should form the nucleus for other co-operation." "What is badly wanted in Essex," says an Essex farmer, "is a bacon-curing establishment on co-operative principle, as live pigs have not been realising more than 4d. per lb. lately in markets." Co-operation in fact is, speaking generally, held to be destined to become an important factor in profitable farming, especially in the case of small holdings.

(D) IMPORTS OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

Imports of
Agricultural
Products.

QUESTION 3 (FORM I.):—What are the principal articles that you manufacture for the home trade in respect to which you experience foreign competition?

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:—

Apples.
Bacon.
Barley—malting.
Beans—dwarf French
Beef.
Bran.
Bulbs.
Butter.
Cakes—cotton.
" linseed.
" oil.
Cattle.
Cheese.
Cherries.
Cider.
Corn—grinding.
Eggs.
Flour.

Flour—wheaten.
Fruit.
Hams.
Hay.
Hops.
" dried
Lard—neutral.
" refined.
Linseed
Maize.
" flaked
" grist
Meal—barley.
" cotton seed.
" feeding
" maize.
Mutton

Oatmeal.
Oats.
Offals.
Oil—cottonseed.
Oil of Peppermint.
Peas.
Plums.
Pollard.
Pork.
Seeds—clover.
" tree.
" vegetable.
Starch.
" maize.
" wheaten.
Suet—beef.
Wheat.

United States of
America.

FRANCE:—

Apples.
Barley.
Beans—dwarf French.
Bran.
Bulbs.
Cakes—cattle.
" cotton.
Cherries.
Clover—trefoil.
Corn—grinding.
Eggs.

Flour.
Fruit—bush.
Fruit and Vegetables—early.
Hay.
Hops.
" dried.
Hyacinths—Roman.
Margarine.
" Cheese.
Offal.
Oil—ground nut.

Oil—linseed.
" sesame.
Onions.
Pears.
Plants.
Plums.
Pork.
Potatoes.
Roses.
Rye Grass.
Seeds—carrot.

France.

1257	Imports of Agricultural Products —continued.	FRANCE (<i>continued</i>):— Seeds—clover. " flower. " grass. " lettuce. " mangel. " onion.	Seeds—radish. " turnip. " vegetable. Starch—rice. Straw.	Strawberries. Suet—beef. Trees—young. Vegetables—preserved. Wheat.
	Germany	GERMANY :— Barley. " pearl. Basic Slag. Beans—dwarf French " runner. Bran. Briars. Bulbs. Cakes—cotton seed. " linseed. " oil. Cherries. Dextrine. Eggs. Flour.	Groats. Hay. Hops. Lilies-of-the-Valley. Margarine. " cheese. Meal—rice. Oats. Onions. Oil—linseed. " rape. Peas. " split. Plants. Plums.	Potatoes. Seeds. " carrot. " cauliflower. " clover. " flower. " grass. " mangel. " tree Spinach. Starch—potato. " rice. " wheat. Straw. Wheat.
	Holland	HOLLAND :— Apples. Bacon. Barley—pease. " pot. Beans—broad. " runner. Bulbs. Butter. Cakes—cotton seed. Cheese. Eggs. Fruit of all kinds. Groats. Hams. Hay.	Margarine. " cheese. " mixtures. Moss litter. Mutton. Oats. Oil—linseed. " rape. Onions. Pears. Peas. " split. Plants. Plums. Potatoes.	Rice—broken. " granulated. Roses. Seeds—cauliflower. " clover. " grass. " spinach. " turnip. " vegetable. Shrubs. Starch—potato. " rice. Stock—nursery. Straw. Trees. Vegetables.
1258				
1259				
	Russia	RUSSIA :— Bacon. Barley. " grinding. Beans. Butter. Cakes—cotton. " linseed. " oil. Cheese.	Corn. Eggs. Flour. Hams. Hay. Hops. " dried. Lard. Maize.	Meal—barley. Millet. Oats. Offal. Peas. Pollard. Pork—fresh. Seed—clover. Wheat.
	Canada	CANADA :— Apples. Bacon. Barley. Beans. Butter. Cakes—linseed. Cheese. Flour.	Grout. Hams. Hops. Lard. Maize. Meal—feeding. Oatmeal. Oats.	Peas. Pork. " fresh. Seed—clover. " grass. " red clover. Wheat.
1260				
	Belgium	BELGIUM :— Apples. Azaleas. Bulbs. Cherries. Eggs. Fruit of all kinds. Hay.	Hops. " dried. Oil—linseed. Onions. Palms. Pears. Plants.	Plums. Potatoes. Seed. Starch—rice. Straw. Vegetables.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY :—

Austria-Hungary 1261

Barley.	Hops—dried.	Seed—clover.
Beans.	Margarine.	„ red clover.
„ runner.	Meal—barley.	Starch—rice
Eggs.	„ feeding.	„ wheaten.
Flour.	„ maize.	Vegetables.
Hops.	Offals.	Wheat.

AUSTRALIA :—

Australia

Apples.	Cheese.	Plants.
Bacon.	Flour.	Oats.
Barley.	Hams.	Oil seed.
Beans.	Hops.	Seed.
Butter.	Maize.	Wheat.
Bulbs.	Meat.	

1262

INDIA (including Burma and Ceylon) :—

India

Barley.	Flour.	Oil seed.
Beans.	Linseed.	Peas.
Bones.	Maize.	Seeds.
Cakes—linseed.	Meal—bone.	„ cotton.
„ oil.	„ rice.	Yarn—coir.
Dari.		

ITALY :—

Italy

Beans—dwarf French.	Lemons.	Seed—onions.
Butter.	Melons.	„ vegetable.
Cakes—oil.	Oranges.	Sulphur.
Cheese.	Seed—cauliflower.	Tomatoes.
Grapes.	„ lettuce.	Wheat.

1263

DENMARK :—Bacon, Barley, Butter, Cauliflower seeds, Cheese, Clover seeds, Eggs, Grass seeds, Hams, Lard, Margarine, Margarine cheese, Pork, Wheat. **Other Countries**

SPAIN AND CANARY ISLANDS :—Bananas, Barley, Dates, Figs, Grapes, Lemons, Linseed cakes, Locust beans, Melons, Onions, Potatoes, Raisins, Tomatoes, Vegetables.

ARGENTINE REPUBLIC :—Bacon, Barley, Beans, Butter, Cheese, Hay, Hams, Linseed, Linseed cakes, Maize, Middlings, Wheat.

SWEDEN :—Bacon, Butter, Cheese, Clover seeds, Grass seeds, Hams, Lard, Linseed cakes, Oats, Oil cakes, Pork.

1264

WEST INDIES :—Bananas, Coffee, Cotton, Hemp, Jute, Oil seed, Oranges, Pepper, Rice, Sugar.

EGYPT :—Barley, Beans, Cotton cakes, Cotton seed, Eggs, Flour, Grain, Linseed cakes, Oil cakes, Onions.

NEW ZEALAND :—Bacon, Bulbs, Butter, Cheese, Clover seeds, Grass seeds, Hams, Meat, Peas, Plants.

TURKEY :—Beans, Bulbs, Grinding barley, Linseed, Locust beans, Malting barley, Maize, Millet, Oats.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS :—Coffee, Cotton, Hemp, Jute, Pepper, Rice, Sago, Sugar, Tapioca.

PORTUGAL :—Grapes, Lemons, Locust beans, Melons, Onions, Oranges, Tomatoes.

ALGERIA :—Barley, Dates, Figs, Hay, Raisins, Straw, Wheat.

CHILI :—Barley, Clover seeds, Feeding flour, Feeding meal, Grass seeds, Linseed, Malting barley.

ROUMANIA :—Barley, Linseed cakes, Maize, Middlings, Oats, Wheat.

PERSIA :—Barley, Dari, Dates, Figs, Millet, Raisins.

NORWAY :—Butter, Hay, Margarine, Straw.

TASMANIA :—Apples, Bulbs, Plants, Seeds.

MOROCCO :—Barley, Flour, Linseed, Wheat.

BULGARIA :—Maize, Oats, Wheat.

JAPAN :—Bulbs, Oil of Peppermint, Tree seeds.

JAMAICA :—Bananas, Quassia, Treacle.

PERU :—Grain, Linseed, Nitrate of Soda.

CYPRUS :—Barley, Locust beans.

MEXICO :—Cotton seed cakes, Linseed cakes.

SWITZERLAND :—Condensed milk.

JAVA :—Tapioca.

MALAY ARCHIPELAGO :—Oil seed.

TUNIS :—Barley.

SOUTH SEA ISLANDS :—Oil seeds.

AFRICA (East Coast) :—Oil seeds.

SOUTH AMERICA :—Maize starch.

CHINA :—Oil seed.

CRETE :—Barley.

UNSPECIFIED COUNTRIES :—

Barley.	Flowers.	Oats—rolled.
„ grinding.	Fruit.	Offals—wheat.
„ pearl.	Hay.	Oils—vegetable.
Beans.	Hops.	Peas.
„ locust.	Malt.	Pork.
Beef.	Margarine.	Potatoes.
Bran.	Meal—barley.	Poultry.
Butter.	„ feeding.	„ and game food.
Cakes—cattle.	„ Indian.	Seeds.
„ linseed.	„ maize.	„ cotton.
„ undecorticated cotton.	„ rice.	„ vegetable.
Cattle.	Middlings.	Sharps.
Cheese—Cheddar.	Milch Cows.	Sheep.
Cornflour—wheaten.	Milk.	Toppings.
Dextrines.	Mutton.	Treacle.
Flour.	Oatmeal.	Wheat.
	Oats.	

(E) SOURCES OF SUPPLY.*

Sources of Supply

QUESTIONS 3 AND 4 (FORM VIII.) AND QUESTION 2 (FORM II.):—Give particulars of the principal supplies of the materials, raw and partly manufactured, used in your industry in 1903, and state from what countries they are derived. State if any of the above-mentioned materials, now imported from foreign countries, were formerly obtained in the United Kingdom, and if so, what has caused the change? If you are an importer, please state the principal goods you import, and from what countries?

DAIRYMEN.

Milk, £5,000: England. Butter, £1,500: 90 % Denmark, 10 % English and Colonial. Poultry, £100: 85 % English, 15 % Colonial and foreign. Pork, £300: English. Used to buy all English butter 15 years ago. Foreign butter is now preferred because of uniform good quality. English butter inferior to foreign; could only compete with foreign butter in point of quality by being made by butter experts on the factory system. This system cannot be established, as the milk buyers at the factory could not pay as good a price as milk buyers for town consumption, and would get no supplies.

FLOUR AND GRAIN MERCHANTS.

Oats: home-grown and Russian. Beans: Smyrna and home-grown. Peas: Russia and Canada. Maize: Russia, U.S.A. and River Plate. Wheat straw (for bedding horses): Holland and France. Moss litter: Holland. Locust beans: Smyrna. Treacle: U.S.A. Flour: ditto. The quantity of oats grown in this country is insufficient for its needs. From harvest through the winter on till the spring, I use, as a rule, only home oats, as they are as a rule then as cheap as foreign oats, the supply plentiful and better quality than foreign. But in the spring the supply of home oats runs short and consequently prices go up and one is driven to use the foreign oat. Peas are now not grown at all, and beans in small quantities in Scotland. When well harvested, the home-grown bean is undoubtedly superior to the foreign, but in this humid climate they are troublesome to harvest, and the proceeds obtained for an acre's produce do not make them a tempting crop to grow. Wheat is not grown in sufficient quantities to provide enough straw for the country's wants, and consequently one has to import foreign. I like the foreign straw better as it is whiter than Scotch wheat straw. I consider the wheat crop still a profitable crop to grow where the farmer is situated near a town and has the privilege to sell the straw off his farm.

Beans from Morocco, Egypt, Turkey in Asia, and Burma; maize from United States, Turkish, Bulgarian, Russian, also from Danube ports; oats from Canada, Russian, Turkish, Bulgarian, and Danube ports; peas from Canada and India.

Importers solely of barley from Canada, California, Montana, Chili, France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Hungary, Russia, Greece, Turkey in Europe, Turkey in Asia, Palestine, Egypt, Tripoli in Africa, Benghazi, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco, Cyprus, Crete, Persia, India, New Zealand.

Flour and grain from the United States, Canada, Egypt, Algeria, the Argentine, India, the Morocco Coast, the Levant, Sicily, Italy, Austria, Germany, Russia, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, France, the Danube and the Black Sea, with occasional shipments from Australia and New Zealand. I also import from the Argentine (a country which evidently has a great future). I am not an exporter to any extent; I regularly export bran stuffs from the flour mills here and in Leith, with dried grains, &c., from the distillers to the continent of Europe.

The principal goods we import are the following, and in the order of merit as placed: First, barley; second, maize; third, oats. Barley from the Black Sea, say 70 % from South Russia, 10 % from Roumania, 15 % from Asiatic Turkey, 5 % U.S.A. 99 % of the barley we import is used by farmers and others for feeding purposes, and not more than 1 % goes for malting purposes. Oats from Russia, Germany, Canada, and U.S.A. Maize from S. Russia, Roumania, U.S.A., Argentina, Canada.

Feeding flours and meals of all kinds from Canada, the States, River Plate, Chili, Hungary, &c. We get all we can in United Kingdom, but home production cannot supply the demand for consumption. From every 70 lbs. of flour made, about 30 lbs. of offal (feeding meal, bran, &c.) is obtained, and if every mill in the United Kingdom were running to its full power constantly, the home supply would fall far short of the farmers' and feeders' needs.

Wheat, 4,800 sacks per annum; half English, quarter Argentine, quarter Manitoba. Barley, 600 sacks per annum, Russia; 300 sacks per annum, Bessarabia. Manitoba wheat is practically the best milling wheat in the world, and about equal to that from Duluth, U.S.A. The wheat and barley were all obtained in the United Kingdom; pasture has taken the place of arable land, and then English wheat is not of the required dryness and strength of nearly all foreign.

Maize, raw, about £5,000, 4,000 sacks: America, N. and S. Russia. Rice meal (manufactured), £1,000, 2,000 sacks: Rangoon. Cattle cakes—linseed, cotton, and mixed (manufactured in Liverpool and Hull), £2,000: from Liverpool and Hull. Flour, sharps, bran (manufactured in Liverpool and Hull), £3,000, 5,000 sacks: from Liverpool and Hull. Wheat, oats, barley (raw), £2,000: home grown, but in much less quantities than in former years. Foreign-grown cereals, &c., have replaced home-grown, because former can be purchased more cheaply and are in drier condition.

* It has not been thought necessary to insert more than a few of the many answers in this sub-section.

Wheat: England. Maize, Argentina. Barley, Russia. Forty years ago (when I first began milling), foreign wheat was practically unknown. England supplied practically all the wheat we required. Cause of change: The price of foreign wheat has pulled down and kept down the price of English wheat so much that the latter cannot be grown at a profit. Maize 40 years ago was first imported from India on a very small scale, I should say to the extent of one hundredth part only of the present consumption. Cause of change: Maize is now used for feeding purposes in place of the dross corn which used to be fairly plentiful. Dross corn has now got scarce, because of the great decrease in acreage of white straw crops. Barley 40 years ago mostly came from Russia; the consumption of barley has very much increased since English-grown barley has considerably decreased in quantity. The cause of this is the same as that attributed to the wheat (see above).

Wheat, maize, beans, peas, barley, oats, from all over the world. Each season we are using more wheat of foreign origin, and less of native production, owing to the deterioration in quality of English wheat, and the growing taste of our customers for strong white flour.

Wheat, $\frac{3}{4}$ foreign: from all over the world; different sorts at different times according to their harvests. Foreign wheat has taken the place of English (1) because we could not get sufficient English to go round; (2) foreign wheat is preferred because of its dryness and its strength in many cases, English by itself being too soft and making so small a loaf. Still $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ English is much better than all foreign, as no wheat is so sweet and has such good flavour as English.

Grinding barley from Russia and Turkey; malting barley from Syria, Asia Minor, California and Chili; maize from North and South America, Danubian provinces, and Russia; oats from Holland, Russia and Finland; millet from Persia and Turkey; dari from India and Persia; and cotton cake from Egypt and India.

Barley and maize (round): Russia. Maize (mixed): America. Formerly barley was grown in great quantities to supply the malting trade; what was inferior went for grinding, but after the malt duty was taken off and so many substances used besides malt, it does not pay to grow it, as foreign grinding barley is so much cheaper.

HAY AND STRAW MERCHANTS.

All our goods are imported from France, Holland, Germany, Norway, Belgium and occasionally Russia among Continental nations, and from U.S.A. and Algeria. From British Colonies our imports are practically limited to Canada.

HOP GROWERS.

Manures, guano: Peru and Africa. Bones: India, home, &c. Rape cake and its allies: chiefly home manufacture. Nitrate of soda: Peru. Sulphate of ammonia: home. Basic slag: home and Germany. Shoddy, superphosphate, hair, fur and wool waste, spent hops (from the brewery): home. Meat meal and blood offal: Colonial and home. Other manures: various. Coir yarn for hop growing: Ceylon, India. Sulphur and brimstone: Sicily, &c. Soft soap, quassia: home manufacture. Coal and coke: home. Hop pocketing (jute): home manufacture.

HOP MERCHANTS.

Hops, from U.S.A., Germany, Austria, Russia, Belgium, Canada and Australia.

LINSEED AND COTTON CAKE MANUFACTURERS.

Linseed: Argentine Republic, Russia, India. Cotton seed: Egypt. Maize: La Plata. Locust beans: Cyprus. Pollard: Russia. Rice meal: India. Bone meal: India.

Calcutta linseed, Bombay linseed: India. La Plata linseed, 1,850 tons 19 cwt., £19,000 2s. 5d.: Argentine Republic. Decorticated cotton seed meal, 1,174 tons 19 cwt., £6,895 16s. 7d.: U.S.A. Morocco linseed, 6 tons 16 cwt., £94 11s.: Morocco. Turkish linseed, 13 tons 17 cwt., £173 8s. 3d.: Turkey. American linseed, 25 tons, £311 5s. 3d.: U.S.A. Linseed was grown in north of Scotland, but now cannot compete with foreign importations.

LINSEED AND COTTON SEED CRUSHERS.

Linseed: India, River Plate, North America, Turkey, Russia. Cotton seed: Egypt, India, W. Coast S. America. We use many materials in the manufacture of compound cakes, such as rice meal: Burma. Treacle or molasses: America. Pollards: home milled. Spices: all over the world.

LINSEED MERCHANT, &C.

Linseed cakes from Germany, America, Russia and the Argentine; cotton cakes from Egypt; cotton seed meal from America; rice meal from Rangoon; and treacle for cattle feeding from Jamaica; but all these are bought through London brokers, although shipped for us.

MARGARINE MANUFACTURERS.

Oleo (beef suet), neutral lard, cotton-seed oil, produced in and imported from America. Sesame oil produced in and imported from France. Some oleo is produced in England at the abattoirs at Birkenhead and Deptford, but only in limited quantities, and the qualities are inferior to the American. Cotton oil is also refined in England, but the quality is very much below the American and not suitable for our manufacture.

1277

Oleo-margarine: Great Britain and U.S.A. Ground nut oil: Marseilles and Bordeaux. Cotton-seed oil: Britain and U.S.A. Butter: Denmark and Australia. Milk: farms surrounding creamery. Salt: England (Cheshire). Butter muslin: England (Manchester).

MARKET GARDENERS.

Peas, beans, flower seed from Germany; peas from Canada and New Zealand; beans from Austria; bulbs from Holland and France, and vegetable seeds from Italy, France, Holland and U.S.A.

Bulbs and shrubs from Holland; seeds from Germany and France, and young trees and roses from France.

Japan and U.S.A.—peppermint oils; France—lavender oil; Germany, France, Belgium, Spain and Holland—potatoes, onions, most sorts of vegetables and fruit; U.S.A.—fruit and potatoes; U.S.A. and Russia—corn and seeds, various.

MEAT DEALERS.

Live cattle, sheep, fresh meat (chilled) and offal are chiefly imported from the U.S.A., representing approximately 66% as regards cattle and sheep, whilst the balance is received from Canada. Nearly the whole of the chilled meat and offal is received from the U.S.A.

1278

Frozen meat, &c., from Australia and New Zealand.

Formerly more beef and mutton were produced in the U.K. The bad price of wool and the importation of mutton to this country from abroad proved a great loss to farmers, and now, when needed, the farms in many parts of Scotland, where thousands of sheep were reared, are laid down for deer forests.

OATMEAL MANUFACTURERS.

Scotch-grown oats only: Scotland. American and Canadian oatmeal, which can always be sold in this country at lower prices than the home grown and manufactured article, has had the effect of closing down many "country" mills. Cause of change: Low trans-Atlantic freights and preferential rates by shipping companies and railway companies to the imported article.

PROVISION MERCHANTS.

Butter, cheese, bacon, hams, and other provisions from Denmark, Sweden, Siberia, Holland, U.S.A., Canada, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand. Yes, they are still obtained in part in United Kingdom. Development of trade has caused the change, but that is no cause of complaint.

1279

Preserved vegetables, &c., from France; hams, bacon and cheese from South America; provisions generally from South Africa and China.

SEED MERCHANTS.

Oil seeds from the East Indies, Ceylon, China, Malay Archipelago, Australia, South Sea Islands, East Coast of Africa; hemp, jute, cotton, rice, sugar, pepper and coffee from the East Indies and Straits Settlements.

Clover seeds from Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand, Chili, France, Germany, Austria and Russia; grass seeds from France, Germany, Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand; flower seeds from Germany and France and tree seeds from Germany, U.S.A. and Japan.

1280

Peas from U.S.A., Canada, New Zealand, Germany and Holland; beet seed from France; beans (runner), from Germany, Holland and Hungary; (broad), from Holland; (dwarf French) from Germany, Italy, France and U.S.A.; carrot, from France and Germany; cauliflower from Italy, Holland, Germany and Denmark; lettuce and onion from France and Italy; mangel, from France and Germany; radish, from France; spinach, from Holland and Germany; turnip, from France and Holland; flower seeds, from Germany and France; sundry other seeds from Germany, France, Holland and Italy; bulbs, from Holland, U.S.A., Japan and Turkey. Most of these are for export and cannot be grown in this country for this purpose, except peas, mangel and turnip, which could all be grown here, prices being equal. Grasses and clovers—personally we do very little in, but they are imported in large quantities from Holland, France, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, New Zealand, Canada and U.S.A. The red clover and cow grass could be grown in England and the Colonies, the Italian rye grass in England and Ireland, and most of the other grasses in Ireland and the Colonies, prices being equal.

Bulbs, seeds and plants from Belgium, Holland, France, Germany, Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania.

Lily of the valley and briars from Germany; bulbs and trees from Holland; azaleas and palms from Belgium, and roses and Roman hyacinths from France.

STARCH MANUFACTURERS.

Tapioca flour: Java and Singapore. Farina (potato starch): Germany and Holland. Sago flour: Singapore. Indian corn, starch: U.S.A. We formerly made farina from potatoes (both sound and diseased), but owing to Germany and Holland being the great potato-growing countries of the world, and having cheap labour, there is now no farina made in Great Britain. We formerly manufactured it at Glasgow and Ayr in Scotland, and at Downpatrick in Ireland. Our consumption of Indian corn starch for our Glasgow works was made up to 1899 at our Ayr works, but owing to American competition we had to close our works at Ayr, and against our wish have to buy from America.

VEGETABLE AND FRUIT MERCHANTS, &c.

Oranges from Spain ; apples, pears, and plums from France, Belgium and Holland, and potatoes from Ireland, Scotland, France, Holland and Germany.

Apples from Canada, U.S.A. and Australia ; bananas, oranges, &c., from West Indies ; oranges, lemons, onions, grapes, tomatoes, melons, &c., from Spain, Portugal, Italy, &c. ; bananas, potatoes, and tomatoes from Canary Islands ; potatoes and onions from France, Belgium, Holland, Germany ; all kinds of fruit from France, Belgium, Holland, &c., and dried fruit (dates, figs, raisins, &c.) from Spain, Turkey, Persia and Algeria.

Oranges and onions from Spain ; lemons from Italy ; plums, cherries, &c., from France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and U.S.A. ; apples from Canada and Australia ; onions from Belgium, Holland, Germany, France and Egypt.

Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market

(F) FOREIGN COMPETITION IN THE HOME MARKET. *

QUESTIONS 4, 5 AND 6 (FORM I) AND QUESTIONS 8 AND 14 (FORM II.) :—*Are any articles similar to those manufactured by you imported into this country below your cost price ? If so, please state particulars as far as you can.*

Have you any information leading you to conclude that such imported articles are placed upon the British market at or below the normal cost of production in the country of origin ? If so, please state particulars as far as you can.

Is your trade subject to adverse competition from foreign countries in consequence of any difference in the rates of wages, in the hours of labour, or in other respects ? If so, please give such particulars as you can.

Is the proportion of foreign-made goods to British-made goods in any branch of your trade increasing or diminishing ? If so, please say to what extent, and give reasons for the change, if you can.

Is it within your experience that foreign traders are injuring your trade by disposing of their goods in any of your markets at a less price than they obtain for similar goods in their home markets ? If so, please give particulars as far as you can.

Wheat, Barley,
Oats, Offals, etc.

G. W. PLOWMAN, MOULTON CHAPEL, SPALDING ; Miller, Corn Merchant, &c.

No trade has been more altered through foreign competition than mine. 20 years ago I purchased hardly anything but what was produced in this country, but now all the English grain I purchase is put on rail at nearest station and sent away. I used to make flour from all English wheat, but now owing to millers in ports such as Hull, &c., being so much better situated for getting foreign wheats, I can buy my flour much cheaper and better than I can make it. I used to buy a little foreign barley, but now grind very little English but 10 times the quantity of foreign ; we had then a very small inquiry for maize, but now nearly every farmer uses maize for his horses and poultry. There is a large quantity of offals used, purchased from the same places as flour, consequently they are principally from wheat. Oil cake is all made from foreign seed so the position is as follows, viz. : In my neighbourhood where English corn is perhaps cheaper than anywhere, it is nearly all sent away, and excepting when they are on the grass land, nearly every horse, beast, pig and fowl is fed on foreign produce only.

M. M. HOBSON, HARPERLEY MILLS, ANNFIELD PLAIN, R.S.O. ; Miller, Corn Merchant, &c.

The importation of inferior foreign corn, particularly oats and barley, at very low prices, compels millers to trade in these inferior articles, and consequently reduces the price of superior English and Scotch grain much below their real market value, and also cost of production, which to me, appears a serious loss not only to the farmer but to the country. The land is going out of cultivation and not yielding what it ought to.

FORM No. 4,203. Farmer and Miller.

All cereals, that is wheat, oats, barley, beans, &c., beef and mutton. I showed a good sample of beans to a buyer, a neighbour of mine, the other day. He said, "Your beans are in better condition than I expected they would be after such bad harvest weather, but I am sorry I cannot buy them of you as I can buy (imported) beans from Liverpool delivered here into my siding for less money than I can offer you, and what is more, I can sell them, which is all I want. I have not bought any English beans this year."

T. SMITH, SANDHOLME MILL, GARSTANG, LANCS. ; Miller and Farmer.

Our trade is principally buying and milling or grinding foreign grain for local consumption. The very extensive importation of same has practically displaced the home products and driven the arable farmer and labourer into other pursuits. The principal provender trade we have is in Indian corn, Canadian peas, Egyptian beans, linseed and cotton-seed cakes, as well as compound cakes made from imported ingredients, such as cotton seed, meals, Rangoon rice meals, treacles, locust beans, &c. This of course takes the place of home-grown wheat, barley, oats, rye and other cereals, and considerably reduces their value, while in adverse seasons these home productions become unremunerative to the growers, checking the outlay of capital and earning capacity of all classes connected with agriculture. The importation of foreign-made flour in place of the wheat prevents the profit of milling it at home, and limits the supplies of offal or bran, pollard, &c., which are so valuable for our dairying industry.

* It has not been thought necessary to publish replies which are a mere duplication of experiences recorded in other answers.

1285

KENCH & SON, MISCOTE MILL, WARWICK; Corn Millers, &c.

Foreign supplies compete against us free of any Imperial or local charge except those paid by merchants and carriers in this country, and probably possess other advantages we are unable to specify.

NEEDHAM & CO., LTD., WORCESTER; Corn and Seed Merchants, &c.

This business is to supply farmers and others with manures, seeds, feeding stuffs, and other agricultural requirements, and to buy English corn, hay and other products of the land. The business has been established nearly a century, and since I entered it in 1861 its character has very materially changed to meet the times. When I first came into the business, Worcester was one of the best wheat markets in the Midlands, and was attended regularly by large millers from Birmingham, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Tipton, Macclesfield and other places, besides many dealers in English corn. My firm paid large sums to farmers every week, mostly for wheat grown locally, but this year we have not paid altogether since harvest as much as we formerly paid in one week for English grain. Very little corn is now grown. Large areas, formerly corn-growing land, have become poor grass land, a good deal of it hardly supporting a sheep per acre. No millers from the large towns now attend our market, and the trade has gradually dwindled away. The money formerly paid by my firm and others was to a large extent circulated amongst tradesmen in Worcester and adjacent towns, and tended to advance the general prosperity of the district. Many farmers and tradesmen formerly in affluent circumstances have gradually disappeared, and many tradesmen have the greatest difficulty in making an honest living; and this may account for much of the dishonest trading of the present day, as evidenced by the many Acts of Parliament which it is found necessary to pass for the protection of the public against fraud. Competition to a moderate extent is healthy, but the extremely keen competition of the present day engendered so largely by free imports sold under cost of production is not good for the moral tone of the community. There are small tradespeople who have no other resource but to follow the trades of their father, and who would be honest and straightforward if they could obtain a living thereby, but having to enter into such keen competition to provide for their wives and children are driven, to say the least, to doubtful methods of doing business which in their hearts they despise, and so lose their self respect. The very low prices and keen competition of the present day are not healthy for the morals of the lower middle classes, who after all are the ratepayers and backbone of the country, and it is doubtful how far they are beneficial for the working classes, as they tend largely to wilful waste and extravagance, besides being an encouragement to laziness and neglect of their proper and legitimate work.

1286

W. DUNCAN, BOGS MILL, SLATFORD, NEAR EDINBURGH; Miller.

Granulated rice is about the only article in which we have foreign competition, as it comes from Holland to Leith, and is sold at 5s. to 6s. per ton less than we can sell it. All that I can say on the matter is that as far back as I remember, between 50 and 60 years, all the small country mills driven by water-power round about Edinburgh were fully employed night and day, and mills of the size of the mill of which I am the tenant would employ then perhaps 6 millers and 2 carters, with 5 and 6 horses, the nature of the work then being mostly grinding peas and maize for dairy food, with oatmeal and pot barley occasionally. Now, owing to so much wheat, flour and oatmeal and Quaker oats coming into the country, the large mills have so much competition with foreign flour and oatmeal they cannot be kept running full time. That being so they have fallen back on the work that was all done in the country mills, and being more able to buy by cargoes grain, peas and Indian corn, they can undersell us country millers by 7s. or 8s. per ton at our very door. In the valley of the Water of Leith, on the distance of 12 or 13 miles from source to sea, there is a fall of 900 feet, and waterfalls and mills were formerly so many that you could almost pitch a stone from one mill to the next one. Now all that is changed, as a good few of these fine old mills have disappeared altogether, some others are in ruins and those that are left have a hard fight to get ends to meet. I know in my own case we now only employ 3 millers, 1 carter and 2 horses, or just $\frac{1}{4}$ of what used to be, and even at that the work fluctuates so much during the year we could do with fewer men at times. The same story can be told of most of the water-mills on most of the rivers and burns that I know of in Scotland—if one visits a village where there was wont to be a busy little mill—now you find a ruin.

1287

W. HIPWELL, SHARNBROOK, BEDFORDSHIRE; Farmer.

Wheat is sold to mills about a mile away; other produce is delivered to a station adjoining the farm having been sold by samples to dealers at 2 market towns about 8 miles away in different directions. Barley from this district goes to local maltings in Bedford or to the great malting centres such as Ware, Burton, Derby, Newark or Birmingham. Oats are mostly sold locally. Beans locally and to Birmingham. London, though so large, takes nothing from here, although it is only 50 miles away. The foreign stuff almost always undersells us there, and when people get used to that they will not change on to the English, though it may occasionally be cheaper.

1288

J. W. FISHER, ABBEY CORN MILL, KNARESBORO', YORKS.; Miller.

My trade is subject to adverse foreign competition from various sources, one of which is that foreign grains are brought cheaper from Hull by the railway companies than home-grown grains. I could buy all the grain I require from neighbouring farmers if it were not that I am obliged to buy foreign grain to enable me to compete with other millers.

There are large firms of millers at Hull who grind nothing but foreign corn, and they are delivering in this neighbourhood the same articles as I manufacture at less money than I can buy English grain in this or other localities, such as—

	Foreign. Per qr.	English. Per qr.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Crushed oats	15 3	1 2 0
Barley meal and Odessa barley meal..	16 9	1 6 8
Bean meal	1 5 6	1 16 0
Wheat meal	1 6 6	1 9 4

H. PARKER, NORWICH; Seed Merchant.

I buy much cheaper through free trade and can do more business at advantage to myself. When the duty was put on grain in 1902-3 I was shipping small broken and best rice from Holland; what made the tax unpleasant was the uncertainty in the amount; sometimes it was 5d. and sometimes 3d. for the same rice, which was not satisfactory.

SHAW, SON & CO., 45, HIGH STREET, HULL; Grain Merchants.

Our experience of the last corn duty was that prices were not affected by it to the prejudice of the consumer; on the contrary, when the duty was taken off last year prices advanced somewhat owing to the natural law of supply and demand. One complaint we have is that foreign firms who do not pay rates and taxes in this country are allowed annually to send their travellers over here and do business direct. Were we to go to Russia or Germany to offer English samples, we should be called upon to pay from £50 to £100 per annum for a license.

SIMMONDS, HUNT & CO., 24, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Millers.

The recent duties on grain, flour, and offals hurt no one, but directly benefited the home-grown article. Of late years English offals have dwindled to small proportions, whereas under the duty they rose at once in quantity, as did home-made flour. English, Irish, and Scotch oats benefited enormously by the small duty, certainly borne by the foreigner, on oats, offals, &c. Speaking broadly, the grain trade regretted the duty put on, but infinitely more regretted it being taken off, and considered same to be bad policy from any point of view. We incline to believe it never added to the cost at all, if the late Boer War demand is taken into consideration. Ten years' residence in New York leads us to believe that trade soon adapts itself when the restrictions are moderate and not intricate. Foreign grain trade is steadily increasing, and acreage diminishing; at the same time population here and consumption per head, particularly of wheat, is increasing.

This arises in part from our farming system not being conducted to regularity of samples, large lines of similar quality are not to be depended on, and consequently do not fetch full values; foreign shipments sold in large lines of uniform "grade," whether of one or other grain, distinctly advantageous to the miller, maltster, or other handler. Notably does this affect the miller in his use of home-grown wheat. Certainly until the tax on flour somewhat interfered, London was the well-known dumping ground for American flour, and at times stocks were heavy and overshadowed everything—as this gave American millers immense banking facilities, it naturally enabled them to add to their daily output and put a somewhat fictitious value on wheat, but prejudiced that of flour here, while enabling them to maintain their home markets by shipping away all daily surplus. Anyone conversant with the Minneapolis trade would confirm this as operative in the past. For last 2 years the shipments have not been oppressive from various causes. How, otherwise, can the material growth of English milling, dating from the war tax, be satisfactorily explained.

FRANK LLOYD & CO., NELSON STREET, LYNN; Grain Shipper.

The competition of foreign grain is closer each year; farmers are compelled to grow bush and tree and ground fruit and flowers and potatoes in lieu thereof. Foreign wheat is said to yield stronger flour. Foreign barley is said to yield brighter ale, especially when we have sunless summers as 1902, 1903.

C. A. JENN, TOWN MILLS, BLACK TORRINGTON, NORTH DEVON; Miller.

Every article that I sell is imported below my cost price. British farmers could have produced the grain which has been sold in British markets for the last 20 years. I have had over 60 years' experience in the trade, and the last 40 years, since the Americans began to send us grain, our trade has been going down, and scores of little mills are now idle. The foreigners have made inroads in every direction. We cannot afford to pay much for labour. My losses through foreign competition have been many hundreds of pounds.

J. WEBSTER WICKHAM, ALBOUNE MILL, HASSOCKS; Miller, &c.

When they have a surplus they dump it down here for what they can get, but not much during the last year, because wheat was not so plentiful with them as it was a few years ago, when it was to be had as low as £4 5s. per load of 10 sacks, at which price it was a great loss to the grower.

J. HOWELL, NANT-QB-EGWYS MILL, HANBOIDY, WHITLAND, CARMARTHEN; Miller.

The articles imported into this country below my cost price are wheat and hay from U.S.A., barley and oats from Russia, onions, &c., from France. Abundance of imported articles for food, which are not of the best keeping properties, are placed on the British market for disposal below the cost of production in the country of origin. I find labour very scarce, not on account of the wages or hours of labour, but of the bad state of the dwellings of the labourers in the country.

H. DENYER, ROLLER MILLS, CARSHALTON; Miller.

U.S.A. and France. The French must depreciate the price of English-grown wheat, as it is very similar to the flour made from English wheat. The American is a stronger flour, and can be used with advantage to both miller and baker if a good proportion of English wheat is ground; but should a tax be put upon the manufactured flour, our machinery, which has been improved so very much the last few years, would be quite capable of turning out as good flour, and would employ many men to make and keep the up-to-date machinery in repair.

FORM No. 5,498. Miller.

Their quality helps us to get rid of our weak English-grown wheat; the public won't eat bread made from English-grown wheat alone.

C 4,050. Millers, Grain and Produce Merchants.

We still find more and more, day by day, the foreigner taking a strong hold on the British trade in manufactured barley and oatmeal. I send you herewith part of the *London Corn Circular*, with advertisement, by German millers, of their pearl barley and split peas for sale in this country, and I am at present in communication with our Consul in Hamburg in regard to checkmating this by offering our goods against those firms in Holland and Germany. I fear, however, the task is hopeless. They can send their goods into this country free of all duties, in subsidised steamers, carrying the same goods at about half the freight which we pay coast-wise, while we, to get into their country, have to scale their almost impregnable tariff wall. Our Manchester agent writes: "We regret we cannot get orders here. There is a heavy stock of cheap Dutch barley lying in this city, which is being sold at prices which we fear you cannot touch." Our Belfast agent writes: "Why are you not in a position to compete with Rotterdam mills in supplying cheap-class barleys." (Of course we know reason, they have cheap labour, long hours and low freights, all which handicap our production.) "These people have to import barley into Rotterdam as it is not made from home-grown, and we are sorry to say the mills referred to can take $\frac{2}{3}$ of the trade from this part of the country." Our Hull agent writes: "No chance with your barleys here against the importation from Holland, which we brought in here by steamers at nominal freights." Our London agent has the same story. What is to be done? Soon it will be the old, old, story, another British industry passed entirely into the hands of the foreigner. We are still feeling very severely competition from America and Canada in oatmeal, and from Holland and Germany in manufactured pearl barley. This latter trade is increasing week by week and month by month. It seems only a question when we shall be ousted entirely from the home trade in our own markets.

R. S. TURNILL, SAWTRY, PETERBOROUGH; Corn Merchant.

Owing to the price of foreign grinding barleys being lower than English, we have to make the greater part of our meal from foreign barley, whereas if the price of foreign barley was raised by a duty, English barley would be used, and it would be an inducement to the farmers to grow it.

J. BISSET, ESPLANADE SAW MILLS, ABERDEEN; Miller.

We get oatmeal in some seasons from U.S.A. It is sometimes re-manufactured and sold at a good profit. I manufacture no home barley; what I use is mostly Russian. My mill being a small one, and foreign competition not affecting me, I court cheap imports.

E. KIDD, TEMPLE BACKS, BRISTOL; Miller.

Since the duty has been taken off flour all the large flour mills in the neighbourhood have put down plant for grinding barley, which cannot be imported as flour is, as it requires to be fresh ground, consequently the rate for grinding barley has been reduced in the last 30 or 40 years from 1s. per 200 lbs. to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., notwithstanding small coal has just about doubled in price. I have latterly had to reduce number of men.

O. H. MACKENZIE, INVERBEWE HOUSE, POOLEWE, SCOTLAND; Landed Proprietor.

Besides wool, I used to grow and sell oats. They are now imported so cheaply from Russia, where they make their men work such long hours and pay them so little that it is impossible to grow oats at a profit in this wet west-coast climate. I used to get 30s. a qr., now only 18s.

C 3,572. Seedsman and Farm Produce Merchant.

Longford was one of the finest oat-growing districts in Ireland, and at the present day I can have foreign oats delivered here cheaper than I can buy from the farmers.

FORM NO. 4,189. Miller.

Foreign competition enables workmen to get a better living, and while small factories here suffer nothing, probably large factories feel it. Foreign, and especially Canadian, oats are constantly on the Scottish markets reducing the value of home production, but at the same time, home production is not sufficient to keep pace with the consumption.

BRYAN HALL, LOUTH, Lincs.; Corn Miller.

United States, Argentine, Hungary, and occasionally Russia. The finer qualities of wheat offals, such as low-grade flour and fine slips, are sent here in large volume, to be sold for the best price they will fetch.

F. H. WILKINSON, BECKINGHAM MILL, VIA GAINSBORO'; Miller, Baker, &c.

Feeding meals. Situated so far inland, foreign competition does not affect me here. Home competition is the worst here, also high price of labour.

P. H. COOPER & Co., WHALEY BRIDGE; Corn Millers.

It is a disadvantage to receive in this country U.S.A. milled flour, they receiving the labour and retaining the offals. The wheat could be milled here and the offals for feeding would become more plentiful and cheaper. The manurial value of these offals would be enormous to the land here—therefore we could grow more stock, corn, cereals, &c.

D. O. CABUTT, GRAPTHORPE MILL, NEWARK, NOTTS.; Miller and Baker.

Foreign sharps compete heavily with the barley-meal business.

T. SCOTT, HARRY MILLS, ORKNEY; Miller.

My trade in meal up to 1891 was principally with Shetland merchants, but for the last 3 years I could not sell them any at the price they offered owing to the low price American and Colonial meals could be bought at. To-day a circular or price list was handed me by commission agents in Glasgow offering to sell oatmeal manufactured in U.S.A. at 11s. per boll of 140 lbs., whereas I cannot buy the grain and manufacture the same into meal at less cost than 12s.; that is allowing nothing for freights by sea and land.

in the Home
MarketWheat, Barley,
Oats, Offals, &c.
—continued.

	s.	d.	
U.S.A. Cost of maize grits (raw material)	15	0	per sack.
Cost of manufacture	2	0	„ „
	17	0	
Cost of American manufacture maize cones	15	6	„ „
Loss	1	6	

J. NORTH, LOWER MILLS, WHITCHURCH, HANTS ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

U.S.A., France, Russia, Hungary and Argentine—flour, barley meal and offals. Offals are usually 10s. to £1 cheaper than home manufactures. Flour averages about 2s. below English. Competition through cheapness of rent and production of raw articles.

THE CEREALS COMPANY, LTD., GREENOCK ; Manufacturers of Flaked Maize, &c.

U.S.A. maize grits and flaked maize. We ascribe the low prices at which it is possible for our American competitors to sell maize grits in this country to the fact that they are working in a protected market. They doubtless make large profits in their home market and, in addition, the fact that they have command of both the American and the British markets enables them to so increase their production as to reduce their own cost to a point which gives them a cost price with which it is altogether impossible for us to compete. This is in addition to whatever they receive in the way of drawback from the U.S.A. Government.

E. C. HORRELL, TEFFONT MILL, SALISBURY ; Miller.

U.S.A. Flour, bran and other offals, maize meal, and practically all feeding stuffs. Cattle feeding stuffs, and until recently flour, but found I could not manufacture as cheaply as I could buy foreign. I cannot see how they produce articles at a profit, for I have bought foreign barley, Azov, Persian, &c., lower than 10s. per qr. of 400 lbs., and maize equally as cheap and the manufactured article cheaper than the raw material.

Flour and Oatmeal

F. R. PERRY, HENLY GROVE, BRUTON ; Farmer, Miller and Corn Merchant.

Flour milling is now quite a decaying industry. When I commenced milling first, my mill at Spargrove did a fair trade in grinding wheat and preparing same for flour ; now we never dress a sack of wheat meal. There are dozens of mills in this district gone to ruin where formerly a good living, both for the occupier or owner, as the case may be, was obtainable. Carters and millers had good wages, and were, as a rule, a respectable class of men (millers especially), and had succeeded their fathers for generations in the milling craft. The cause is chiefly the sowing down to pasture of nearly all arable land, and the manufacturing of flour in foreign countries, chiefly U.S.A. Imported cheese and bacon, chiefly from Canada and U.S.A., affect the farmers of this locality.

C. DICKINSON, LINCOLN ; Miller.

We are beaten in quality by U.S.A. flour, which commands the trade at a higher price than the English produce. London millers are now giving fully 5s. per qr. more for American wheat than for English. American flour is frequently sold in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, &c., at as low a price as at New York. No information as regards wages or hours of labour, but about 10,000,000 sacks of foreign flour imported without contributing 1d. to our Imperial Exchequer, while I am oppressed with income tax and local taxation, which is unfair and unjust.

E. J. SCIVIER, DUBLEY ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, NEAR BOTLEY ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

If no foreign flour were imported, should employ more hands and do double the work. We suffer from adverse competition through cheap grades of foreign flour.

J. FULLER & SONS, RAY MILLS, MAIDENHEAD ; Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

U.S.A. send us flour to some extent, but not at the present time, nor for the past 2 or 3 years. It has been generally supposed on the London market that flour has been dumped at times. There have been times when the price of American flour has been (relatively) lower than that of American wheat on the London market.

FORM No. 6,394. Corn Millers.

Flour is imported at 2s. to 3s. per sack below price that we can manufacture it for.

C. CHAMBERLAIN, CHILTON MILL, HUNGERFORD, BERKS. ; Miller.

Flour is imported from the U.S.A. principally, Argentine, &c. The principal competitors are the Pillsbury Washbourne Mills (United States), whose output is 21,000 sacks per day. I understand the capital is held mostly in England. It pays no dividend on ordinary shares, which are £10 each, and worth about one-half that sum to-day. Most American flour is consigned to importers to be sold at best price obtainable. A good deal of the flour imported is placed at the same price, or lower, than that obtainable in the country of origin. Hours of labour here are more restricted than abroad ; but wages may be lower here (that is in country districts).

FORM No. 6,123. Miller.

American flour is frequently sold in Great Britain at lower prices than American bakers can procure it in America. This applies to identical brands of flour.

1301

T. MARTIN & SON, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, DURHAM; Millers.

We have had no foreign competition here of any importance for many years. The English mills are now better equipped than any on the Continent or U.S.A., and we are able to procure flour which is better liked than any imported. We should explain that most of the bread in this part of England (North-East) is baked at home, and for this purpose foreign flour is not found so suitable as the home-milled article. France sends a great deal of flour (principally to London), which can be sold at a price disadvantageous to English millers, owing to manipulation of the import duty on wheat, and "drawback" on exported flour by French millers. All milling countries without any doubt send their surplus flour, resulting from over-production, to this country to sell for what their agents can make. This must be against the home industry. Foreign flour, in some cases, might be sold here at prices which no British miller could meet, but there might be local conditions in the place of origin which enabled the miller there to produce it at a profit. In France the wages are less and the hours longer.

B. H. MEECH & SON, SUTTON MILLS, WYEMOUTH; Millers and Corn Dealers.

U.S.A. and other foreign countries—flour and oatmeal. Nearly shut our mills up. We have bought hundreds of sacks of flour, "bakers' fines," each 280 lbs., at 2s. less money than the American winter wheat would cost for the same weight and at the same market on the same day.

L. G. JONES, TREFRIW FLOUR AND SAW MILLS, TREFRIW, R.S.O., N. WALES; Miller.

Germany, U.S.A., and France send ground flour, bran, and all kinds of meal. No doubt we have to pay more wages and work less hours. Ground cereals from abroad have destroyed the mills here. With the small quantity of corn grown in this country mills are worked to a loss every year.

C. 630. Miller.

The flour trade has suffered very much from dumping. During the past 3 years we have imported the following flour, principally from America:—1900, 8,520,000 sacks of 280 lbs.; 1901, 9,029,000; 1902, 7,800,000—total, 25,449,000. Average, 8,483,000, or 1,060,373 tons. Had the wheat been imported instead of the flour, the stock-raisers of this country would have had an extra 400,000 tons of milling offals, namely, middlings, bran, pollard, sharps, &c., for feeding. Since 1878 our home requirements have increased per annum by 6½ million sacks of flour of 280 lbs. each, but the flour mills of this country only made 2 million more sacks in 1902 than in 1878, namely, 27½ million sacks in 1878 and 29,250,000 in 1902. The difference has been made up by the imported article. Last year there was a falling-off in the importation of flour. This was partly owing to the duty and partly to the shortness of spring wheat in America. The mills of this country made more flour, and consequently more offals. The stock-raisers here were not prepared for this increase in feeding stuffs, and 1½ million cwt. of wheat offal, principally bran, were exported to Denmark and Sweden (chiefly the former).

C 247. Miller.

A subject which is engaging the attention of British flour millers is whether we shall not be more than ever inundated with flour from the other side of the Atlantic by American and other mills being largely built in Canada.

T. RICHARDSON, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE; Corn Merchant, &c.

I give you my experience as a large flour importer. Twenty years ago the quantity of foreign flour imported here was enormous, part from Germany, but chiefly from the U.S.A. The American miller had the advantage of the newest and most scientific machinery, and made so much better quality than the English miller made. The English millers groaned under these importations, and were heavily handicapped. But one or two of the more enlightened went over to the U.S. to study American systems of milling, and came back to gut their mills and install a new system, called the gradual reduction system by rollers. The old stones were discarded; it paid them. Their example was speedily followed; now all the good mills are worked on the new system of rollers, with other appliances for the cleaning of wheat of the most scientific character, with this result, the foreign manufacturer is completely beaten out of the field. The English miller has the advantage over his American competitor of having large assortments of wheat; he can blend better and make a better sack of flour. So that, speaking from experience of Humber to Tweed, I can testify that the import of foreign flour has gone down to practically nothing, does not affect the market or prices a fraction, and now English flour milling is a prosperous business, so much so that milling power is being increased every day and dumping on the part of English millers is extensively carried on; they make more than they can vend in their own districts, and have to ship it to all quarters.

GEO. ROFFEY & SON, 41, SEETHING LANE, TOWER STREET, LONDON, E.C.; Grain Merchants.

The supply of foreign-made flour and offals has increased enormously during the last 10 years, the surplus make of the big American mills being sent over here to sell for what it will fetch, besides they grind up into flour, the inferior grades of wheat which is not marketable for export, and so get rid of it in that manner. When Mr. Ritchie took the 1s. duty off corn we simply made a present of £2,300,000 to the foreigner. Taking the duty off malt has nearly ruined the English barley grower and enabled the foreigner to flood our market with rubbish, which is now used by brewers and has permanently reduced the value of our barley crop by 10s. per qr. In the case of U.S.A. flour and occasionally French flour they are allowed a rebate of duty on what they export. The inducement to brewers to use inferior foreign barley has led to the partial ruin of their own trade.

E. STEPHENS, LANGLEY, FIFELE, OXON.; Farmer.

I formerly made flour, but have been forced out of it since 1879. In 1870 we converted about 600 qrs. wheat into flour ¾ English, ¼ foreign. Now none through foreign flour importations. Working now in foreign barley, maize, &c.

1302

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1305

Foreign Competition in the Home Market

Flour and Oatmeal —continued.

FORM No. 5,950. Millers and Corn Merchants.

When our mills were built 8 pairs of stones were put in to grind wheat. Now we only have 2 pairs running occasionally. Owing to agricultural depression and the shortage of live stock in farmyards, there is not nearly the amount of feeding stuffs used as formerly. The price of American bag flour is lower here than at the mill door at Minneapolis, and is also cheaper than wheat to manufacture corresponding quality flour.

FORM No. 5,955. Flour Millers.

U.S.A. send us flour, especially grades called patents. By information we get from American wheat sellers, the American miller gets the advantage, firstly by having choice of wheat, secondly by obtaining a very high price for their flour in their own country, and dumping the surplus very largely in London.

FORM No. 5,976. Flour Miller.

U.S.A. and France send flour. I have been offered before Christmas French flour as good as my own make at quite 2/- per sack less money.

FORM No. 3,933. Corn Miller and Corn and Hay Merchant.

Flour was one of the principal articles in respect to which I experience foreign competition. Practically I do nothing in flour milling for the reason I am not situated in a wheat growing country and if I did make it a feature I would need to use foreign wheat and I doubt very much if I could hold my own against the foreign-made flour. Put a tax on flour and then I would have a different story to tell as well as thousands of other country millers. I believe that such imported articles are placed upon the British market at or below the normal cost of production in the country of origin. A workman in this country is better off as regards hours of labour than his fellow in the States and Canada, and very much better off every way than the continental labourer.

WOODS, SADD, MOORE & Co., LODDON, NORFOLK; Millers, &c.

France and Germany send flour, Russia, U.S.A. and Austria, clover seeds, France, grass seeds. We cannot say whether these are imported below the cost price or not, as the cost price is not easy to obtain from the English farmers of whom we purchase the seeds. Sometimes flour is imported at less than the cost price. It would be well if a duty could be placed upon foreign barley imported for brewing, it would help the agriculturist very much and would hurt no one. Flour is sometimes sold in this country below the price at which we can produce it, but this may be owing to the fact that a low grade adulterated article is imported. We manufacture flour, which is subject to foreign competition. We deal in red clover seed, which is subject to competition from France, Russia, Austria, U.S.A., South America, and Canada; trefoil clover from France; white clover seed from Germany and Italian rye grass from France. We buy the above seeds from farmers and clean them ready for the market, and have to compete against the above-mentioned countries.

FORM No. 5,876. Millers.

20 or more years ago we had to give up the manufacture of flour owing principally to foreign competition. Oatmeal manufacture is less also, partly owing to same cause. U.S.A. and various other countries send flour, Canada and other countries oatmeal much cheaper than we can make it, but we do not say the quality is so good as ours. We hear that flour, &c. (American) can be bought cheaper in Glasgow, &c., than merchants in New York can buy it there.

C. MARSTON, ROLLER MILLS, EARSHAM, NORFOLK, AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK; Miller, &c.

Russia and U.S.A. send flour, feeding stuffs and bacon. The water power in America manufactures the flour better and cheaper, owing to the uniform climate and better condition and quality of wheat.

JOHN TAYLER, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, MELKSHAM, WILTS.; Millers.

Flour is imported from U.S.A., but this greatly depends upon whether the U.S. crop of wheat is very large or otherwise. At present we are not undersold to any appreciable extent.

J. WHITE & SONS, SCOTSTOWN AND IBROX ROLLER MILLS, GLASGOW; Millers.

There is an excessive competition in flour, amounting to dumping. One of our flour mills closed during the last 8 years. Split peas come from France and Holland. Oatmeal suffers from U.S.A. and Canadian competition. Have had conversations at various times, both with American and Canadian millers, as to the cost in manufacturing wheat into flour. Have generally agreed with them that a fair average to count is 3s. per qr. on wheat. Have found that they can easily secure 4s. per qr. on their manufacture in their home markets, and then export what surplus they have at 2s. per qr. cost, thus placing their product on British markets at 1s. per qr. below cost of milling. The late corn tax of 3d. per cwt. on wheat was a great boon to the home miller, and during its operation Glasgow millers ground a great deal more wheat than they did before, as the tax on foreign flour was 5d. per cwt.

J. RANK, LTD., CLARENCE FLOUR MILLS, HULL; Millers.

U.S.A. send flour. But we are not much affected in this (Hull) district. The *North Western Miller*, a short time ago, stated that flour was being sold in England at the same price as they were making at the mill door in America.

FORM No. 5,845. Miller and Merchant.

The same brands of flour as sent here are sold in America at higher prices than they realise here. This is done to work off surplus stock and to keep their mills constantly running day and night.

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FORM No. 5,011. Flour Millers.

U.S.A. and France send us flour occasionally. We are always hampered in sales both as to price and quantity in this district by the large quantity of foreign flour imported. Consumption of foreign flour in this district about 35,000 sacks per week. Home-made about 15,000 sacks per week. France has a drawback on flour exported, which is equivalent to a small bounty. That is to say, between duty paid on wheat imported and drawback on flour exported, the French miller gets a small advantage, which is equivalent to a bounty. America has Sunday labour.

W. TAYLOR & Co., 89, BANK STREET, MAIDSTONE; Millers and Corn Merchants.

Formerly American flour competed seriously with us, but latterly it has been above the level of home prices.

CHURCH & BOOTH, NEWBURY; Corn Millers.

The enormous output of American mills are sent here to clear stock, often at a great loss to senders.

W. L. DUFFIELD, TASBURGH ROLLER MILLS, NORWICH; Miller.

Mainly low-grade flours from U.S.A. and other countries at certain periods come here much cheaper than we can buy their wheat and produce it. Certain foreign flours are being sold on our markets below the ordinary value.

I. CLOVER & SON, SUDBURY, SUFFOLK; Millers.

French flour, being of the same general nature as country-made English, is competitive with it. France is able to compete, in spite of higher local wheat prices, by reason of the "Acquit" system, which confers a virtual bounty upon the French miller, and enables him under certain conditions to undersell the English country miller on his own ground. Any such system of bounties, direct or indirect, should, in the interest of English milling, be met by countervailing duties. On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that strong American flours are the natural complement of the real English flours, and the cheap importation of the former directly increases the use of the latter. It follows that any tariff which tends to decrease such importation might be injurious to the use of English wheat, increase of production of which appears to be of vital importance to the nation. Flour made in England from American wheat is less adapted, as a rule, to carry English, probably due to the necessary maturity of the former and partly to climatic conditions.

W. SILSBY, PRINCES RISBOROUGH; Miller.

Flour is imported from U.S.A. always, and sometimes France, below cost price.

EXORS. OF F. TOPHAM, HERTINGFORDBURY MILLS, HERTFORD; Miller.

United States and Canada send us wheaten flour. From time to time American flour is sold here under the cost of American wheat and manufacturing charges. Unfortunately, we cannot rely on getting a regular supply on these terms; we may say that when we do, no less labour is employed.

FORM No. 5,375. Miller.

U.S.A. send us flour at average of 1s. 6d. per sack below cost of home made.

T. TOWNBOW & SONS, LTD., HIPPER CORN MILLS, CHESTERFIELD; Millers.

Flour is imported from U.S.A. at a price which admits of no profit.

F. PEARSE & SON, THARSTON MILLS, BY LONG STRATTON, NORFOLK; Millers.

We cannot send flour to London on account of cheap foreign imports and cannot pay expenses on my flour to compete. We give rather more wages than the Americans.

FORM No. 5,516. Miller and Farmer.

Flour, butter and eggs, are imported below cost price.

A. BRADBRIDGE, CHELMSFORD; Manufacturer of Flour, Feeding Stuffs and Manure.

One reason is the low freight on flours. One small parish, Stebbing in Essex, used to possess 7 flour mills, but owing to importation of foreign flour, 5 have completely disappeared.

S. CAFFYN, HIGH STREET, CUCKFIELD; Miller and Corn Merchant.

Foreign competition has completely cut the country miller out. In this district there were 10 mills at work, now only 3.

JAMES HODSON, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, ROBERTSBRIDGE, SUSSEX; Miller..

U.S.A. (Minnesota, Minneapolis and Kansas) sends flour. The competition has not been so keen during the last year or two, but for several years before then a large amount of surplus stock was consigned to England, frequently on such terms that, when the bills became due, the surplus had to be disposed of at what price it would realise, which of course meant under market price. Inasmuch as the price of the wheat, the cost of freight and transit, and of manufacture are known, it becomes simply a matter of arithmetic.

FORM No. 3,507. Miller.

It is well known that when the huge volume of American flour was launched in Scotland in the 80's, the trade was not organised fully, and much of this flour was sent on to be sold at what it would bring, and thus make a market for the future. Scotland bore the brunt of this excess of Minneapolis flour, as this sort

**1313 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

Flour and Oatmeal
—continued.

of strong flour suited the Scotch markets. The quantity of Scotch flour arriving yearly at Glasgow, for distribution over Scotland, is more than 3 times the product of Glasgow mills. It is well known that the Glasgow mills are more perfect than any American mills and constructed with remarkable skill and conducted with business ability. The population of Glasgow has increased from 509,000 in 1880 to 782,000 in 1903, yet fewer Glasgow mills exist than in 1880. In 1880 there were 17 flour mills in and near Glasgow, now only 5. The American miller dumps his surplus, and ruins trade. The organs of the flour trade in America (in Minneapolis) make no secret that the higher price obtained at home enables them to sell to the United Kingdom below prime cost, and I have been told by rival American millers that this is the secret of the low price at which they frequently sell against us. In Scotland millers largely use Minneapolis wheat, which is our chief opponent, so we can compare the prices very closely. It has been stated that some sort of Minneapolis flour was sold in the United Kingdom at the same price as in Minneapolis, i.e., that the American miller was sacrificing railway and ocean freights, together about 3s. per 280 lbs., to force business. U.S.A. mills frequently work on Sunday, and can thus put out $\frac{1}{2}$ more product. The Hungarian mills do the same. Since the talk about the reform of the tariff was begun, the millers in U.S.A. have got the railways to make a concession of about 4d. per sack of 280 lbs. on the railway rate, if the flour be for export.

T. LAMBERT, BOURNE MILL, HADLOW, KENT ; Miller.

I have had 30 years' experience on my own account, and during this time have sunk in the milling of flour £1,500 with no hope of again recouping, but more than likely have to close down, with a certain depreciation of £1,000 more in value of property. This has been the fate of over 20 mills within a radius of as many miles, entirely due to foreign importation of flour and other food stuffs for cattle, &c., which was originally supplied by local mills now defunct. This unfortunate state of affairs has been increasing in magnitude for the last 25 years, too late now to ever hope for its revival.

FORM No. 3,676. Miller.

U.S.A. flours, and also offals, are sold under our selling prices (which do not admit much profit), and owing to this our deliveries are curtailed and we are thereby prevented from running our mill full time, and employing more labour.

PRESS BROS., LTD., GT. YARMOUTH ; Millers.

England is the dumping ground for the extra output of American flour ; the Yankees make good prices at home, and by sending their extra output over here enables them to turn out a larger quantity at less cost of manufacture. The bounty given by French Government very often enables French flour to be sold at less than we can make it for.

G. J. BUTCHER, MANNINGFORD MILL, PEWSEY, WILTSHIRE ; Miller.

By forcing so-called flour on our markets from U.S.A. it cripples our local trade very much.

FORM No. 3,763. Millers.

U.S.A. sends us flour, occasionally offal also ; France sends flour, and Argentine flour and offal.

C. LUCY & NEPHEW, LTD., FLOUR MILLS, STRATFORD-ON-AVON ; Millers.

U.S.A. chiefly sends flour, both high and low grades. It is a well accepted fact that much flour, low grade especially, is shipped to this country on consignment, and the prices it is sold at leave little room for doubt that they do not make the normal cost of production in the country of origin. I don't feel that we have any grievance on this score.

S. T. DEWING, BURNHAM, OVERY, NORFOLK ; Miller and Merchant.

Flour without the bran is imported below cost from U.S.A. and Canada, consequently causing the latter article to be scarce and dearer for the farmer to buy. Millers' wages are higher than they were a few years since, but so many mills in the country are closed, flour being supplied by the large town mills ; half of the flour used is of foreign mixture, many of the mills using nothing but foreign wheat.

C. WILSON, RESTON MILL, RESTON, BERWICKSHIRE ; Miller.

We have had to give up the manufacture of flour, once our principal trade, and suffer generally from foreign grains of all kinds. It is a known fact flour is dearer in America than it is sold in this country ; just another case of dumping surplus stuff.

JOHN URE & SON, 67, HOPE STREET, GLASGOW ; Flour Millers.

Flour is sometimes imported from U.S.A., Austria, and France below our cost price

FORM No. 3,873. Flour Millers.

U.S.A. wheat-flour is sold in this district, imported at Southampton and London, at lower prices than cost of our own manufactured flour. The large Minneapolis mills aim to make the largest possible quantity and ship any surplus they do not require at whatever price they can obtain. We consider this surplus is placed upon the British market below the normal cost of production. While as a rule, no wheat comes direct from U.S.A. to our nearest port, flour is always arriving there direct from New York at a low inclusive rate from the mills. We understand these mills get a monopoly of the freight, and in consequence it seems impossible to get wheat by the American Shipping Co., which comes to Southampton.

H. WHITMORE, LTD., VICTORIA STEAM MILLS, ROMFORD ; Millers, Corn, Seed and Forage Merchants.

Flour made from American and French wheat is imported, and large quantities of Australian flour were dumped here in 1901 and sold, we should say, much under cost price.

1314

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WHITWORTH BROTHERS, WELLINGBOROUGH ; Flour Millers.

France is able to send us flour owing to the bounty given to French millers on exported flour. The French millers, after they have paid the duty on wheat imported, have in the way of a bounty a full rebate of the tax on flour they export to England, which sadly depresses our country millers' trade, in fact, very often compels small millers to shut down their mills. The late Registration fee on flour made us much more busy.

E. F. YOUNGMAN, WORTHAM MILLS, DISS, NORFOLK ; Miller.

When flour in excess of the demand is dumped into London I feel its effects, as it makes the port millers slack, and they put the trade into country districts at very low figures, causing similar men to myself to work under cost to keep the trade, sometimes for months, together. Large quantities of flour are simply sent here to fetch any price that can be obtained ; under such circumstances the figure must necessarily often be under cost.

SPENCER, SON & HANCOX, GT. ALNE MILLS, NEAR ALCESTER, WARWICKSHIRE ; Millers and Corn Merchants.

At present time feeding offals are from time to time within 10s. per ton, and occasionally equal in value to wheats owing to flour being manufactured abroad and consequent scarcity of offals. When big American mills get overstocked, flour is occasionally sent into Bristol on consignment to be sold for what it will fetch irrespective of cost. This has been a well-known fact in the milling trade for many years. Bristol millers with present methods can readily hold their own against fair competition. This can be easily verified from time to time when large importations of American flour arrive in Bristol or London or Liverpool and working out against market price of wheats in New York.

1318

J. APPLEBY & SONS, LTD., 16, BRUNSWICK STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Millers.

U.S.A. and Canada send flour and offals ; France, flour ; Chili and Argentine, offals ; and Australia, flour. The competition in flour has not been so keen during the last few months owing to the high prices of wheat ruling in the U.S.A., caused mostly by speculation. France exported flour to the United Kingdom at less than normal cost owing to operation of bounty.

W. T. HEYWARD, LEAT MILL, LIFTON, DEVON ; Miller, Corn and General Dealer.

We have given up flour owing to foreign competition.

DEWING & KERSLEY, WELLS, NORFOLK ; Millers.

U.S.A. and France send flour—U.S.A. when favoured with an average market, France to a minor extent with a good harvest. No business could derive greater benefit than flour milling from a certain market for its surplus output. The plant must be erected to supply the busiest trade and during slack periods the plant &c. is idle, or the general trade disorganised in the effort to keep running. I am not surprised at the large quantity of imported flour, in fact I cannot understand why the French mills do not take greater advantage of their opportunity. It is only "other respects" that trouble us, the great difficulty in dealing with the surplus during slack periods prevent development in this country, while the U.S.A. miller can work away without anxiety and clear anything he does not require for his own customers, drawing cash against B/L. It will probably fetch cost price in this country and possibly get him a small profit. Ours is simply a question of home trade—the best market in the world. Of course the Factory Acts increase the cost of production.

1319

J. BODY, TRECORME MILL, QUETHWICK, LISKEARD, CORNWALL ; Miller.

We are subjected very much to adverse competition from foreign countries.

FORM No. 4,490 ; Millers.

U.S.A. send flour, which is cheaper and better than we can make.

P. H. BREWSTER, STRETTON MILL, STAFFORD ; Corn Merchant and Miller.

U.S.A. send flour. We used to make flour, but compelled to give up this branch as unable to compete with imported flour.

W. BEARD, WORKSOP MILLS, WORKSOP ; Miller.

U.S.A. flour is imported into this country below cost price of manufacture from the country of origin. Foreign competition from dumping on the market below our cost price, less wages and longer hours, and by allowing all agricultural products to come in free.

1320

J. W. FISK, BRIGHTSTONE, ISLE OF WIGHT ; Miller and Farmer.

U.S.A. and S. America, send us flour and miller's offals. Rather than sell at a lower price in the country of manufacture, goods are sent here at a loss. No doubt the labour in England is 50% higher than most other countries in accordance with the amount of work our labourer does in a given time.

HY. MILLS, BEX FLOUR MILL, HEYSHOTT, MIDHURST, SUSSEX ; Miller, Farmer & Corn Merchant.

Through the large mills in America having such an enormous output, surplus is sent over here to be sold at any price.

FORM No. 1,762. Flour Millers.

We are experiencing foreign competition principally in white flour, and as millers, this has a certain disadvantage. We are also buyers of flours in addition to being millers, so that in that respect we reap an advantage and the one virtually counteracts the other. As far as we know the wages and hours of labour in the countries with which we have most competition are quite as favourable as our own. It is only in the natural resources of the country that the foreigner has the advantage.

1321

Foreign Competition in the Home Market

BOWYER & PRIESTLEY, OFFORD & BUCKDEN MILLS, HUNTINGDON; Millers.

U.S.A., France, Argentina, Canada, Australia, and Belgium send us flour. Foreign and Colonial flour is frequently sold quality for quality, similar wheat, at a price below that which we can manufacture it here.

Flour and Oatmeal —continued.

GREENWOOD & CO., ROCKCLIFFE VALE CORN MILLS, RACTUP; Millers.

U.S.A. send us flour of various qualities; Argentina sends offals, &c., France and Hungary, flour. Although our trade is all consumed at home, say, within a radius of 20 miles, yet in consequence of free imports, our port millers are driven inland and thus become keen competitors in our local markets. U.S. millers send large quantities of flour to Great Britain and Ireland, dumping it in years of plenty.

T. S. SMITH, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, GT. BARDFIELD, ESSEX; Miller.

The U.S. millers having a profitable home trade where they get a good price for their best makes, send the rest here at a lower price.

FORM No. 4,562. Miller.

I do not experience any foreign competition, but am glad to buy foreign corn for manufacture and grinding. I do not know that corn, peas, beans, wheat, &c., are sent here and sold below cost price; they are invariably bought in the country where they are grown and brought here by merchants who try to make a profit on the transaction. We are glad to buy foreign grain and could not do so well without it.

1322

JACKSON BROS., NORWELL MILLS, NEWARK; Millers & Bakers.

The large import of foreign flour, duty free, is the greatest drawback the milling trade has to contend with.

FORM No. 4,696. Miller.

Austria-Hungary send feeding flour. This, with other feeding stuffs, is put on the British market at a price generally below what the home products can be sold at; the quality is inferior, but the difference in price causes them to meet with a ready sale. Home millers would benefit by their being kept out and the production of these feeding stuffs left to them; also the articles would be of much better quality.

H. BELL, GRANTHAM; Miller.

Foreign flour is imported into this country at a considerably less price than it can be manufactured here from the same quality wheat.

FORM No. 4,757. Millers.

United States flour is undoubtedly at irregular intervals imported into or consigned to this country and sold at a price below that at which the home manufacturer can produce it. There is a considerable foreign competition in flour, the importation of all grades amounting to about 8,000,000 sacks per annum. At intervals also there is competition in wheat offals, principally from the U.S., the Argentine Republic and Chili.

1323

FORM No. 4,779. Corn Millers.

I do not experience any direct foreign competition; the large importation of foreign flour drives the port millers inland, which causes greater competition in consequence.

W. PUDDEPHATT, WEIR HOUSE MILL, CHESHAM; Miller and Farmer.

I don't say flour is imported below our cost price, but it takes away two-thirds of our manufacturing. I now grind two-thirds less wheat than I did when I started 26 years ago, and for 10 or 12 years after. Flour is imported in such quantities that it has destroyed hundreds of mills in this country, and if I had to pay rent for my mill I could not live by that alone at the present day. There is not much difference in our hours of labour but our wages have gone up, some men 4s. and some 5s., others 2s. 6d. and 3s. each per week. It is very difficult to get a boy to work on the land; education takes them off the land.

FORM No. 4,910. Miller.

Several years back I used to make a good bit of flour, but since so much foreign flour has come into the country, I can buy it cheaper and of better quality than can be made by the old-fashioned machinery. Get the foreign flour taxed, then probably we shall see our English mills on the go again, instead of being shut up or pulled down.

1324

FORM No. 4,938. Miller and Flour Manufacturers.

American low-grade flour is being sold in London 20s. per 280 lbs.; the lowest that we could possibly sell it at the present time to clear ourselves is 23s. per 280 lbs. or 3s. more than the American price. Minnesota good or first-grade flour is sold at 21s. per 280 lbs. the price of this wheat in London being about 32s. per 496 lbs.; should we attempt to make flour from this wheat we could not do so to sell under 24s. per 280 lbs., therefore the flour is dumped here about 3s. per 280 lbs. under price.

W. BROWN & SONS, CENTRAL CITY FLOUR MILLS, BIRMINGHAM; Flour Millers.

Austria, France, Canada and Russia send us flour; Argentine Republic, flour and feeding offals from wheat. The United States is the chief exporter of flour to United Kingdom, but the other countries mentioned use the United Kingdom as a dumping ground for their surplus production. Some years ago our managing partner was employed in three separate flour mills in America, two of which did an export trade. He has every reason to believe that a large quantity of this flour was sent to the United Kingdom on consignment and sold often below cost. American mills cannot prosper on a purely export trade, but they use the British market as a dumping ground for their surplus production, and sell this often much below the price they make at home. They

1325

thus increase their output and cheapen their cost of manufacture. The American milling trade aims at manufacturing its whole wheat crop at home and exporting it only in its manufactured state—flour—retaining the feeding offals for their farmers and feeders with which to produce cheap beef and bacon. Between 8 and 9 million sacks of 280 lbs. each of foreign flour are annually imported by the United Kingdom.

W. EGERTON, GOMSHALL MILL, SURREY; Miller.

In the case of American flour the small freight rates at which flour is brought into this country as compared with the freight rates for wheat, completely handicaps the milling trade here, especially so in the case of country millers who have to get their foreign wheat by rail to their mills. French flour is no doubt placed on the British market at, or possibly below, the normal cost of production, in consequence of the bounties paid to the French millers for exporting their manufactures.

C. R. SMITH & SONS, LTD., PORTSLADE-BY-SEA, BRIGHTON; Flour Millers.

We do not know the hours worked or the rate of pay in foreign countries, but in our own that is not the question, nor the reason for dumping their stuff in England. American flour can be bought in London cheaper than at the place it comes from, Minneapolis, and on that account London is called by the N.W. American millers the London sewer, i.e., a place to get rid of their surplus flour at what it will fetch. French flour owing to rebates by their government is sold at shillings per sack less than the same flour sells in their own country. America and France are the only countries that really bother us.

1326

J. GLOVER, LTD., VALLEY MILLS, KILLMARSH, SHEFFIELD; Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

U.S.A., Hungarian and French flour, is imported below our cost price. From the reports of the various companies who export flour to England and the profits stated to be made by them, it is evident that, as they report a good trade at home (for home consumption) and make a profit on that trade, yet on the whole turnover are only able to pay (in some cases at any rate) the preference dividends, the surplus which they send here must be sent at a loss.

J. ADCOCK, BLYTH MILL, COLESHILL, BIRMINGHAM; Millers and Farmers.

10 years ago I used to turn out weekly 40 or 50 4-bushel sacks of wheat flour, now I make practically none as I can buy flour cheaper than the wheat to make it of.

EASINGWOLD FLOUR MILL CO., EASINGWOLD; Corn Millers and Merchants.

U.S.A. and France send us flour. This we think is the over production of these countries rather than the difference in wages and labour. Cheap shipping rate and bounties lend a hand.

C. J. HUDSON, ISLE OF THANET FLOUR MILLS, RAMSGATE, KENT; Flour Millers.

We get flour from U.S.A., Canada, France, Austria and Hungary. Considering the low price at which some of these flours are offered we believe they are sometimes sold below cost price.

1327

W. TAVERNOR & CO., BRIDGFORD MILLS, STAFFORD; Flour Millers.

We have the best reason for saying that flour can be bought in Liverpool at a lower price than at its place of manufacture in the United States. It is generally known to the trade that this country is the special dumping ground for the surplus flour production of the States, prices being quite a secondary consideration.

FORM No. 2,849. Millers and Corn Merchants.

Flour is imported from Hungary, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, France and Germany. We find the price of this article as a rule very bare, but we cannot say that it is below our cost price, provided we have been fairly lucky in buying the wheat. There are times, however, when it is sold so cheap that the U.K. miller is better to withdraw from competition and stop selling. In the case of the first two qualities of Hungarian flour we do not compete because we have no outlet for the inferior classes of flour after taking out the two best classes. The inferior classes of Hungarian flour are the staple article of food in Hungary, and millers by obtaining a full price for these at home are able to sell the best at a comparatively low price, to the disadvantage of the U.K. miller. In the case of U.S. flour it is, we believe, admitted by importers that in the American markets flour for home consumption of equal quality with flour for export is quoted and sold regularly at a higher price than flour to be exported. In the case of the two highest classes of Hungarian flour the price is relatively several shillings lower than it was a few years ago in the U.K., and the inference is that the difference is made up to some extent by the higher price received for the class of flour sold for home consumption.

1328

FORM No. 2,875. Millers.

We experience foreign competition in flour indirectly, as every sack of flour which is imported affects us, although very little comes into this immediate neighbourhood.

J. FOWLER, EAST & WEST MILLS, BRIDPORT; Miller.

U.S.A. and France, flour. I believe French flour is imported under cost price, and the French millers get a bounty on flour they export.

T. & H. KING, LTD., GREAT CHESTERFORD, S.O., ESSEX; Millers, Merchants and Farmers.

U.S.A. and France send us flour; Argentine, offals. We cannot give particulars of rates of wages and hours of labour in foreign countries, but cheap ocean freights enable importers to adversely compete with us, as we have to pay high railway rates for carriage in this country. We therefore feel that at least a small import duty should be put upon imported grain to equalize this, with a slightly increased duty upon manufactured goods.

FORM No. 2,685. Miller.

When the markets in America are overdone with flour it is shipped to England in order to keep the mills running. At such times it would probably be sold under the cost of manufacturing. Flour imports very much tend to lower prices of wheat here. Another cause of low prices is the system of selling 3 or 4 months forward. The option clause of paying the difference to cancel the transaction is brought in. Prices are kept down very much by this mode of doing business. If wheat could once get up to say 40s. or 50s. per quarter, the probability is that no buyers for future delivery would be found. Another cause of home-grown wheat being low in price is that the modern roller mills for manufacturing flour require dry hard wheat, and foreign is preferred.

FORM No. 2,631. Millers.

Canada and U.S.A. flour is sometimes cheap, but does not compete because the quality is not suitable. English made is superior in every way. Argentina bran and mill offals are sometimes cheap, but the quality is inferior and therefore competition is not felt. Sometimes customers want an inferior cheap article, and it is an advantage to our trade to be able to buy the foreign article at a low price. A very large proportion of the flour is low quality, for which fair prices are realised in the United Kingdom for feeding purposes. It pays Argentina to export bran and thirds even at low prices, because there is little or no demand at home. Good prices are paid in Argentina for the flour made, and the sending abroad of the offals helps, and therefore these cannot be said to be sold under the normal cost of production.

DUBLIN NORTH CITY MILLING CO., LTD., 113, PHIBSBORO' ROAD, DUBLIN; Millers.

We have very serious competition from America as regards flour. A lot of manufactured flour comes here on consignment; this is generally sold under cost. Our men are paid fair wages for long hours. We have too much competition.

FORM No. 2,603. Miller and Corn Merchant.

Maize and flour are the only 2 articles from abroad which come under my business; the former I get whole and manufacture it myself. The flour is manufactured in America, and the price in a general way is as good as home flour. The cheaper kinds we cannot compete with. Canada sends us oatmeal, but the quality is much inferior, and the difference in price is 7/6 per load of 20 stone.

FORM No. 2,604. Miller.

U.S.A. flour, strong, but bad colour, sold at 15s. to 20s. per sack (280 lbs.) and used principally by millers for mixing with their own make, is a great loss of wages to the British workmen as well as loss of offals to farmers. French flour, low grade, sold 15s. to 20s. per sack (280 lbs.) is used by grocers, biscuit bakers (in place of English wheat flours) and also by millers for mixing. France levies a duty of about 12s. per qr. of 480 lbs. on all imported wheat, but enables her millers to export the same weight in flour (after deduction of 30% for offals) as imported in wheat, by granting a rebate of about the same amount as the import duty. This is a good arrangement for the French millers, as they grow sufficient wheat to support their own country, but it is of a very weak quality, like our own, and the French miller gets the advantage of importing the strong Russian and American wheats, and, with the rebate, exports at a profit flours made from his weak native-grown wheats to England and other countries where there are no import duties to pay. These flours are being sent from one end of England to the other without any taxation. I say it is a most glaring inequality, and a loss alike to the British workman, miller, farmer, and to the revenue of this country. Mills are shutting and shut in every part of the country. Farmers grow less English wheat every year. Millers can't get sufficient without scouring the country 50 or 60 miles from their mills, when a short time ago it was obtainable within a radius of 15 or 20 miles. Farmers should be encouraged to grow wheat by being given a bonus. Flour should be taxed 10% for revenue purposes, and if a tax be placed on foreign wheat, add the same amount on to the flour. If you don't encourage the growth of English wheat you will commit a national crime. How much better position the country would be in to withstand an enemy if our lands were fully planted with wheat, with plenty in the rick-yards from one end of England to the other. I have just shut my mill down nights, tied up two barges, a 3-horse van to sell, and discharged 14 men, just because there is no pay attached to this business. Mill situated within 4 miles of Reading, a thriving town. My discharged workmen would rather pay 2d. more for their loaf and keep on present work.

F. SKURRAY & SON, TOWN MILLS, SWINDON, WILTS.; Millers.

U.S.A. and French flours are undoubtedly often sold under cost of production. French bounty system is most unfair, and enables them to manufacture flour and re-export at a profit, leaving the offals at home. America is not so great a sinner lately, sometimes she dumps flour at unheard-of prices.

DAVID CATT, HAMLIN'S MILL, HAILSHAM; Miller and Baker.

Foreign competition does not interfere with our branch at all. In baking we use mostly home manufactured goods, the foreigner supplying only what cannot be produced here. We suffer nothing from foreign competition—consider it a great favour to get it.

CANNON & GAZE, LTD., ERITH MILLS, ERITH, KENT; Millers.

The foreign millers, especially in America, by keeping their works running full time reduce the cost of manufacture, are enabled to make a better profit on their home trade even if they dump the surplus down in this country at a small loss. Three years ago I visited America. A week before I left this country I bought 2,000 bags patent American flour at 22s. delivered in London. During my travels in America I enquired of bakers in several of the large cities what they were paying for the same brand of flour, and found that they were giving 27s. 4d. to 28s.

1333

A. HAYWARD & SON, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, WOODBRIDGE ; Millers.

U.S.A. flour is sold at times below the parity of American wheat on Mark Lane, consequently we sometimes find it advantageous to buy the American flour rather than American wheat. Weak French flour was sold in large quantities a few years ago at prices below that at which similar flour from English wheat could be manufactured. This especially affects country mills in their London trade. The comparative prices of American flour and wheat points to this conclusion—should America attain the position of sending us the bulk of our food as flour instead of wheat, in the event of any difficulty we should have no adequate alternative supply. There is no doubt the astute Yankee realises and hopes for this position. It is therefore imperative that the Empire should have its own mills either in Canada or on this side.

E. A. EPPS, SALFORD MILL, CHIPPING NORTON ; Miller.

Probably wheat-flour is imported below cost price. My business as a small country miller is too insignificant to help you much. Mine is one of hundreds in the country where a good business was formerly done ; now we are practically wiped out by the importation of foreign flour.

R. M. JONES, LONGDO MILLS, WELLINGTON, SHROPSHIRE ; Miller.

Americans only send their surplus here ; it is dumped down in Liverpool and coast, and their salesmen are out all over the country to sell at prices we cannot compete against. I should say wages and hours are similar. Colonies do not hurt us so much as foreign countries.

1334

H. L. LONGBOTTOM, TUXFORD, NOTTS. ; Miller.

The importation of foreign flour without offal makes it difficult to get supplies of the latter at a reasonable price for the home trade. We can only compete with foreign flour by putting extra price on the offal which makes feeding stuff dear.

J. C. TAVENER, NEWLAND MILLS, N. TAWTON, DEVON ; Miller.

Our principal competition comes from U.S.A., where wages are higher rather than lower. American flour is naturally brought into competition with the home product. At the present moment this is not severe, but there are intervals when it becomes more so. The equipment of English mills has become so complete that as an industry the English miller is fairly well in a position to hold his own. There are intervals when depression exists in America, or by maintaining an inflated high price in the home market an accumulation takes place, and flour is dumped on the English market at below cost.

H. MOORE & SON, LEATHERHEAD ; Millers and Corn and Coal Merchants.

Sometimes flour of about the same quality as we manufacture has been sent from America and sold at a lower price than we could make it. This has happened at several different times, but it has not been the case recently. Our opinion is that they export their surplus flour at the best price they can make, and that price is generally fixed by the law of supply and demand.

1335

S. J. HOWELL, GREAT HAYWOOD MILL AND BAKERY, NEAR STAFFORD ; Miller and Baker.

Flour and all kinds of meals are imported into this country below our cost price.

W. H. YEATMAN & SON, VICTORIA FLOUR MILLS, POOLE, DORSET ; Millers.

Canada, United States and France send us lower grades of bakers' flour under cost price, but not higher quality "Patents." We personally have no grades which exactly match the American brands. We have found that when foreign mills have accumulated a surplus stock, flour is sent here as a clearance at prices accordingly. The market prices, which fluctuate, make a difference to the foreign exports, and sometimes more flour is sent here than at others.

FORM No. 2,212. Millers.

U.S.A. and France send flour, Russia bran, under cost price. Flour and other products of wheat are unquestionably sold at less than normal cost. This result is obtained by the heavy tariffs which practically exclude outside competition ; preserve their home market and keep home prices at a profitable level—enabling them (a) to enormously increase their output, (b) consequently reducing the cost of production, (c) to send their surplus at less than what would be their natural cost if they were restricted in out-put to the home requirements. We have no knowledge of any serious disparity in wages, or ordinary hours of labour, but foreign competitors run their mills on Sunday, thus increasing their output and reducing the cost of production—a practice we are glad to say not adopted by English millers.

1336

H. B. BELL, RUSWAAP, WHITBY ; Miller and Cake Merchant.

I manufacture flour and feeding meals for home consumption. I don't suffer much from foreign flour at this port, but the port millers are very keen, no doubt through import buyers being very keen on them.

W. LENGWOOD, BARNINGHAM, BURY ST. EDMUNDS ; Flour Miller.

U.S.A. send flour under cost price. Low grade American flour now takes the place of flour made only from Suffolk wheat. Twenty years ago I could pay my way by sending flour to the London market, now I send none.

H. H. SMITH, MANAGING DIRECTOR, LANGLEY MILL, NOTTS. ; Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

American flour has been consigned and dumped on this market for years below cost prices. This has been the case during the last 12 months through American wheat parity being higher than here, this is probably the result of speculations in America in the nature of a "corner."

RICHARD STONEMARD, BUGFORD MILLS, MORCHARD BISHOP ; Miller.
U.S.A., France and Germany send flour under cost price.

Flour and Outmeal
—continued.

C. HAMMOND, TANFIELD MILLS, BEDALE, YORKSHIRE ; Corn Miller and Merchant.

The foreigner sends only his flour, keeps his bran and offal at home, a great disadvantage to the agriculturists of this country, as if the flour was all manufactured in this country, which it might be, the raiser and feeder of cattle, sheep and pigs, would be in a better position, as at present he sometimes has to pay almost as much for offals as he gets for his wheat, this being a question of supply and demand.

F. CHASTON, STEAM MILLS, GREAT SHELFORD, CAMBS. ; Miller.

The U.S. flour does not injure me, but French and Australian does. It is sold very near to my cost price.

J. FAIBCLOUGH & SONS, LTD., BANK QUAY MILLS, WARRINGTON ; Corn Millers.

Flour from United States and France, and offals (sharps and bran mostly) from Chili and Argentine, are imported at about our cost price. Flour is imported in a steady stream from United States and irregularly from France. Offals are imported irregularly from Chili and Argentine ; as the stocks there accumulate they are sent over to this country and sold for what they can get.

HIPWELL & SONS, STOKE MILLS, SHARNBROOK, BEDS. ; Millers and Corn Merchants.

U.S.A. common and low grade flours are sold at less than we can manufacture similar quality from American wheat, the conclusion being that the profit is made on the high-class flour sold at home. It should be explained that the same wheat yields a certain proportion of high class and a certain proportion of low grade flour, and it sometimes pays to export under cost to keep mills running. The prices of American wheat and flour in this country are often very disproportionate in favour of the flour, never the other way.

Flour of other grades from French native wheat is being largely sold in London and the South of England, and being sold under the system of "acquits" issued against duty paid in France on foreign wheat, undersells flour made from English wheat, and is really sold under what works out as a bounty. It is conveyed from the port of import to any station on the southern lines at the same rate as to London. That American flour is frequently sold here at the best price obtainable, regardless of cost of wheat, to keep mills running full time and thus reduce cost of manufacture on the total output. Also, French flour is sold here at best price obtainable, regardless of profit, to enable French millers to evade the import duty on foreign wheat by exporting an equal quantity of flour, and so improve with a foreign admixture what they have to sell at home. Formerly when a much larger quantity of English wheat was grown in our district the surplus was manufactured into flour and sent to London. This is now replaced by French and other foreign flours made abroad.

W. & J. CLARK, BOTLEY MILLS, HANTS ; Millers.

U.S.A. sends flour of all grades, and offals to some extent. France sends flour to a moderate extent. The difference in price varies with the market, but as an average, delivered to customers, our price of equal qualities to the foreign flour is undersold to the average extent of 1/6 per sack. We are of opinion that the price at which the foreign flour is sold in this country, quality equal, is such that it must be manufactured at a profit by the producers.

W. BROWN & SON, NORTH WESTERN FLOUR MILLS, CREWE ; Flour Millers.

U.S.A., Canada, Argentine, France, Austria, Australia, and Russia send flour. Our most severe competitors are American millers. A large quantity of their surplus manufacture has always been, and is yet sent to this country on consignment, and is often sold below cost price. This competition is most felt in years when American harvests are abundant, and harvests in other wheat producing countries are below average. The U.K. imports annually between 8 and 9 million sacks of 280 lbs. each of foreign flour, chiefly American. Our managing partner went to America some years ago, and worked in 3 separate American flour mills, 2 of which exported flour to U.K. He has every reason to believe that American mills cannot prosper on an export flour trade alone except under very special circumstances of crops, markets and position of mill. They however sell flour in the U.K. at considerably under their home prices, so as to increase their output, and reduce their working expenses per sack of flour manufactured. When possible they run their mills 7 days per week with the same object in view, and during a slack time they think nothing of laying their men off work and pay. Their expressed aim and object is to export no wheat in its raw state, but to manufacture their whole crop, and export only flour, and they are yearly increasing the proportion of flour exported relatively to wheat exported.

C. H. WITHERINGTON & SON, SONNING MILLS, NEAR READING, BERKS ; Millers.

U.S.A. and Canada send flour. In some years the foreign competition is enormous, forcing down our prices and rendering our trade totally unprofitable. At times flour from America is dumped on our market, and from force of circumstances is obliged to be sold at a lower price than we can manufacture the same quality.

T. W. BUTCHER, BALDHAM MILLS, SEEND, MELKSHAM ; Flour Miller.

U.S.A. flour is sold at about 4s. per bushel, on average, lower than imported wheat can make it. Presume it is their surplus make of principally low class quality.

MORRISH & SON, WEYCEFT ROLLER MILLS, AXMINSTER ; Flour Millers.

U.S.A. flour, mostly Walrus Gralles and medium patents, is sold here under our cost price.

1341

FORM No. 3,121. Flour Millers.

Glasgow for the past 20 years has been a "free coup" for U.S. flour, and we in company with many other millers have simply been wiped out. For 30 years we have been in the milling trade, but last year we were forced to give up the struggle. Our information is from friends (millers in the States and Canada) who tell us frankly they can afford to sell at a lower price than cost because of the high prices they get at home.

FORM No. 3,110. Miller and Corn Merchant.

It is cheaper to buy U.S.A. flour than to buy wheat for blending with English wheat for making flour. I use Azov and English barleys for making meals, the former being slightly cheaper. I think it possible that foreign flour is sold here under cost of production.

R. RUFFLE, HAVERHILL, SUFFOLK; Miller and Farmer.

Foreign flour and wheat at less price than we can produce them are sold here. Trade has gone, also men, as one cannot afford to pay wages owing to the severe foreign competition in flour, and the foreigner does not help us with the heavy rates and taxes.

F. A. MEAD, CLIFFORD HILL MILLS, NORTHAMPTON; Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

United States and France send us flour. Owing to the high prices obtainable in the United States due to protection, all the surplus flour is dumped in this country at much below cost price. I do not think the milling industry in this country is injured by any difference in the rates of wages or hours of labour, but rather by the country being used as a dumping ground by foreign firms for their surplus stock.

1342

J. BRIERLY, KING'S NEWNHAM, RUGBY; Miller.

United States chiefly send us flour, if not below our cost, at such a price as not to leave a living profit. Mine is only a small business, but this portion of it has been almost annihilated. A very large proportion of the flour mills in this county (Warwick) are either closed or reduced to gristing.

A. C. ROGERS, BUCKINGHAM; Miller and Merchant.

U.S.A. flour is imported at for 2s. to 3s. per sack of 280 lbs. less than our cost of manufacture.

FORM No. 60. Millers, Coal and Corn Merchants.

U.S.A. and Canada send us flour, but we are uncertain about it being below cost as the quality is not so good as English made. American flour enables us to sell our flour made from English wheat for mixing. France also send flour. This is certainly often imported below our cost price of English flour and cuts country millers very much. The French get a rebate on all flour exported.

G. W. CHITTY & Co., CHARLTON MILL, DOVER; Millers.

We have no reason to believe that flour is now placed upon the British market at or below the normal cost of production in the country of origin.

1343

S. R. KEYES, DAREN FLOUR MILLS, DARTFORD, KENT; Miller.

A great deal of flour has been consigned to this country and sold below cost, but at the present time this is not so pronounced as formerly. The average imports per annum amount to about one million tons (principally from U.S.A.). It is generally considered by the English milling trade that the Americans get no profit from the flour sent here as it is sold below their home price. The competition here is principally from U.S.A. flour and so the question of lower wages and longer hours cannot be the reason as wages are higher there than here. Occasionally French flour is sold here very low, their wages being lower and hours longer than ours.

FORM No. 1,059. Miller.

The foreign competition has been the cause of nearly all the small water mills being closed and done away with, so we must conclude that has done away with the small millers.

J. W. PARKES, EAGLE FLOUR MILL, BIRMINGHAM; Flour Manufacturer.

Flour from America is put on this market generally at or below cost price to keep their mills going night and day. The importation to this country is about 8,000,000 sacks of 280 lbs. per annum. The largest mill in America, Pillsbury Flour Mill Co., Minneapolis, state that they make over 20,000 barrels per day of 24 hours, and for many years have paid no dividend on the ordinary shares, the only dividend for several years being one of 2½%. Their foreign trade absorbs a good deal of the profit made on their home trade. Of late years the competition from U.S.A. is not doing us the harm it used to. We are doing rather better than we were, and they are doing rather worse, which puts us in a better position than we used to be.

1344

MOLESWORTH & SPRINGTHORPE, SOUTH LUFFENHAM MILLS, STAMFORD; Miller and Farmer.

It is notorious that American flours (particularly the lower grades) are put upon the English market at "slaughter" prices. We do not in this district come into direct competition with foreign flours. Our worst competitors are the big port (English) millers headed by well-known firms in the north. We fear that if a prohibitive duty were put on, big mills would spring up at the ports like mushrooms, and in three years the home competition would be infinitely worse than it is now. This is the present state of things in France and Germany, where the flour trade (in spite of protection) is said to be most unremunerative. Although we do not expect to benefit personally, we think the general trade of the country, especially agriculture, urgently needs protection. The only salvation for the inland miller would be a duty high enough to encourage farmers to revert to wheat growing so that a good supply of local wheats would be insured. In this district all the finest wheat land is out of cultivation, and on the lighter soil barley is grown instead of wheat whenever possible. We have to bring our English wheat long distances by rail now instead of having it delivered by farmers into the mill.

**1345 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

**Flour and Oatmeal
—continued.**

I. H. WITHERS, TOWER MILLS, LONGPARISH, WHITCHURCH, HAMPSHIRE ; Miller.

Flour and meal, or inferior flour for feeding purposes, are imported from U.S.A. Foreign dumping of flour has practically ruined the water power stone mills throughout the county. This is a very great loss. No power is so cheap as water, and the local river has always found plenty for the past 14 years. To show what a state stone milling has come to, I paid for the first 7 years of my lease £180 per annum mill and 80 acres of land, the next 7 years £155, and at the present time £120, and £100 is enough for it.

BUSCK & Co., 66, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C. ; Corn Merchants.

We are not dealing in manufactured goods, but we know the dumping of French and American flour must hurt millers and keep up the price of bran and offals.

FORM No. 10,550. Grain Merchants.

Grain duties in France and Germany are a great help to our importers, as we get nearly the whole surplus from U.S. and Canadian mills at very moderate prices, and our only competitors are U.K. buyers. The recent War Tax on grain (especially on flour) restricted our trade very considerably, and duties (like those in Germany, etc.) would entirely ruin our trade as importers of flour. The proportion of foreign to British-made flour is diminishing—probably 20 % in the past 2 or 3 years. Our American and Canadian trade is rapidly drifting into the hands of local and country millers owing to improved machinery and supplies of better qualities of wheat from Russia and the Argentine. Feeding cakes are always imported.

W. BAILEY AND EXORS. OF LATE T. WORTHINGTON, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER.

I have heard that certain brands of flour are sold in U.S.A. at more money than they are sold at here, but I don't know it for a fact ; sufficient for me to know is that American flours have a certain value over English-made flours (*i.e.*, they are strong, more water absorbent, and command a higher price). I believe there has been a lot of American flour dumped here in the past, but it is not the best and well-known brands such as I refer to above, but merely cheap and inferior qualities, and I think that a duty on imported flour would have the effect of stopping this cheap stuff, but I believe there will be a good trade done in the best article whatever the amount of duty. Of course we must either import wheat or flour from U.S.A., and if we put a heavy duty on flour we shall naturally get less flour and more wheat, and as our Colonial wheat will come in free, it will have to be sold here at a less price than foreign with a 2s. duty, and I fail to see where the English farmer is going to benefit. Imports of flour are neither increasing nor diminishing.

PILLMAN & PHILLIPS, BRUNSWICK STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Flour Merchants.

English milling is far from being a decayed industry. Liverpool has become, during the last 10 years, the second milling centre in the world, and flour mills are still being erected here. They are all profitable concerns—some of them wonderfully profitable. Country millers (who are almost the only users of English wheat) are largely helped by the import of foreign flour. The flour made from English wheat is too weak to make bread, and has to be mixed with the strong foreign flour. Almost all these millers buy foreign flour, and mix it themselves. Otherwise bakers who buy flour made from English wheat have to get foreign flour to blend with it or it would be useless for their purpose. The very millers, therefore, who work upon home-grown wheat are those who would suffer badly if their supply of strong foreign flour were cut off. But apart from this, the manufacture of flour is the one which gives less employment than almost any other that can be named. Although the industry is a large one, the Commission will see from the census returns that the number of persons employed in it is absurdly small, about 28,000 in all. If the import of flour were stopped and the whole home consumption provided by English mills, the extra number of persons employed would be very small. The addition of some machinery in existing mills would go far to provide the deficiency. Mr. Chamberlain and others lay stress upon the advantage foreign countries derive from the offals, which are retained. We believe this has been much exaggerated. If it had been desired to attract offals to this country, why was it that when Sir Michael Hicks Beach re-imposed the Corn Duty he also taxed foreign "offals" ? It is a matter of fact that the rebate given to port millers in the U.K. (during the period when the duty was in force), on offals exported, enabled them to ship offals to countries like Denmark. Thus they helped not the British farmer but his competitor who was thus assisted to supply the English market with butter and bacon. We are confident that the labour of the Commission will be in vain and shall do our utmost to resist a change, which, in our opinion, is full of danger to the country. Ours is one of the trades which is "threatened" by Mr. Chamberlain. In a Free Trade country like this there are thousands of businesses similarly situated to our own—giving employment to an immense number of persons and contributing just as much to the taxation of the country, Imperial and local, as if we were manufacturers. You can imagine how we shall fight for our lives. English millers during recent years have adopted the improved systems of milling which gave foreign millers a great advantage 20 years ago.

UNWIN SOWTER, ST. MICHAEL'S LANE, DERBY ; Miller, Maltster and Corn Merchant.

No export trade, therefore not affected. What I chiefly suffer from is a practice which certain British port millers have of dumping large quantities of their manufactured goods in my district, which, at times, very much disorganizes the local trade.

W. HAWKESLEY & Co., CHARMOUTH MILLS, DORSET ; Millers.

Yes—U.S.A. in flour, as we cannot compete, and not only is our manufactured flour not sold, but we lose the profit in offal and bran.

FORM No. 3,233. Millers.

This was a flour mill for centuries till ruined by dumping of American flour, 1879 to 1883. Since that date it is a mill for grinding all sorts of grain for cattle and other foods.

1346

1347

1348

S. BULLOCK, AYLISHAM, NORFOLK ; Corn Merchant and Flour Miller.

Undoubtedly to a very large extent, especially in flour.

M. L. BAGG, RADIPOLE MILLS, WEYMOUTH ; Miller.

The mills that I own and am interested in are 4 country water mills (water power only), so that what affects my trade is mostly second-class baker's foreign flour, which comes much less than what all English flour can be produced for. I have 3 out of 4 water mills standing idle. I own and act as trustee for them at present.

WELCH & SON, DOCK MILL, SOUTHSEA ; Flour Millers.

Yes, for a time the U.S.A. did, as we in England were behind in our system of manufacture ; this caused an improvement in mills to set in. The foreigner is now beaten in quality and price by home mills, and he seeks other markets. We now have more competition from home mills than from foreign.

J. SCOTT, FAIR VIEW SAW MILLS, BISHOPS TAWTON, BARNSTAPLE ; Miller.

My trade has suffered much for the last 20 years on account of open door to foreign competition and foreign tariff on all manufactured goods.

FORM No. 10,467. Grain Merchants.

Flour is imported to this country in large quantities each year, owing to the foreigner and Colonists having the benefit of the offals, &c., for cattle feeding, increasing their milling power to our millers' disadvantage.

FORM No. 2,703. Miller.

American flour is imported at a much lower price than our cost. My experience, which covers 30 years, is that manufactured flour coming to this country has ruined the milling trade. 25 years ago we could keep mill doing night and day, and the output per week would be about 70 or 80 sacks flour ; now we have quite given up the flour trade, and the same has been the case with many mills on this river.

FORM No. 2,076. Miller.

My former trade was a flour miller : almost all the flour mills or a large number had to stop, the cause was foreign competition in Scotland. Canada and U.S.A. send us oatmeal at 1s. 6d. to 2s. below our price at home.

FORM No. 3,599. Miller.

I do not think German or Belgian make much difference to our market, there is always American flour sold ; I cannot say how much.

J. BRETHERTON & Co., LTD., CHAMPION MILLS, LIVERPOOL ; Corn Merchants, &c.

I understand that surplus output is sent here to be sold at what it will fetch. By the extra facilities afforded them for transit, &c., foreign countries will in the near future supply a lot of produce which could be supplied at home. Just as every child is sent to school, so every acre of land ought to be trained to produce all it can, as a safeguard to the Government, and to increase the wealth of the nation, and not to pay others for doing what we can do ourselves. I could have sold a lot of home-grown hay and chopped hay produced in the district if foreign hay from many countries had not come in so cheap.

J. FORREST, ST. MARTIN'S MILLS, PERTH ; Miller.

U.S.A. and Canada. Oatmeal is imported and sold on an average of 4s. per sack cheaper than can be made from home oats. Foreign oatmeal is generally sold by retailers, either pure or mixed, as home oatmeal. The quality of foreign oatmeal is very much inferior to home, so much so that people cease using oatmeal altogether. It is the retailer who gets the difference of price, not the consumer. 90 % of the foreign oatmeal is sold by the retailers as home oatmeal and charged home oatmeal prices ; therefore it is the poor people who suffer, and the extra profits go into the retailers' pockets. Foreign oats and barley are generally sold mixed with home and bruised, which makes detection difficult. This practice is a great hardship to the firms which sell home grain only, as they cannot quote so low a price as those who mix with foreign grain.

W. ROSE, BLACKMILL, CLUNAS, NAIRN ; Miller.

The trade at my mill is confined to the farmers of the district, milling their oats for domestic use. There is now so little demand for oatmeal on account of foreign and U.S.A. flour being so much used that the mill is to be discontinued. One person is all the mill has employed for years past.

J. MILNE & Co., LTD., CALEDONIAN MILLS, ABERDEEN ; Pearl Barley Manufacturers and Millers.

Scotch and pearl barleys. In oatmeal we have both foreign and Colonial competition, viz. : from the U.S.A., Germany and Canada. Holland—manufactured barley. We would not say that this was imported under cost, but as they have lower charges for wages, freight and taxation than we have in this country, they can, therefore, sell cheaper than we can. United States and Canada—oatmeal. Some years ago we are confident this article was sold from the United States and Canada under cost to take our market, but recently manufacturers there have combined to obtain higher prices, and we should not now say that it is sold under cost. It is, however, made from very inferior oats, which are cheap in both countries, and although sold here by the wholesale as Canadian or United States manufacture, we never, after repeated inquiries over many parts of the Kingdom, found a retailer that would sell United States or Canadian oatmeal ; nothing but pure Scotch manufacture. There is no doubt that this foreign meal is fraudulently given to the consumers under the disguise of Scotch oatmeal. Scotch and pearl barley was, till recently, made by Scotch millers. America tried to compete, but failed. In the last 2 or 3 years, serious competition has arisen from Germany, but chiefly from Holland. From our Manchester agent we learn (Sept. 30th, '03,) we have lost the order, it has gone to the

1353 Foreign Competition in the Home Market

Flour and Oatmeal —continued.

Dutchmen, who are capturing all the trade; unless you can meet this competition, we shall lose this business. They have 1s. or 2s. per ton advantage in freight, only pay 13s. per ton for 4-ton lots from the Continent, and it is landed free on Manchester quay. The orders of 1 or 2 other buyers have also gone to Holland. Our London agent writes repeatedly that there is more serious competition from Dutch barley than from any British miller. Our Leeds agent writes: "The Dutch barley is getting a strong hold here." The British Consul at Amsterdam informs us that the Dutch millers who compete with us have their mills on the Zaan, the hours of labour are 72 per week, against 54 for our day shift, and 60 hours per week for our night shift; wages are 2½d. to 3½d. per hour, as against 4½d., 4½d., and 5½d. paid to our men. Freights from Amsterdam to English ports are less than our coasting rates per ton, e.g., Aberdeen to London, 10s. 6d.; Amsterdam to London, 6s. 3d.; Aberdeen to Manchester, 15s.; Amsterdam to Manchester, 13s.; and so on in every case. Taxation (both local and Imperial) in Holland, is much less than in this country, and apart altogether from a tariff on manufactured barley there should be a premium to bring up the foreigner's costs to a level with those of the home manufacturer. In oatmeal we complain of unfair methods of sale. We do not fear fair competition but when a cheaper article, made from inferior raw material is placed on the market under the name of the well-known and reputed first-class Scotch oatmeal, something should be done to restrict its import. The Merchandise Marks Act is not sufficient. The bags show that it is made abroad, but, out of these bags, it is untraceable, and is undoubtedly used to adulterate and undercut the genuine home product. The imports of foreign and Canadian oatmeal into the port of Aberdeen in 1900-1-2-3 (all undoubtedly used for the adulteration of Scotch oatmeal) were 805, 1,209, 403, 507 tons respectively. Glasgow is the only other port of which we have records. The American and Canadian imports of oatmeal from 1841 to 1859 were nil, from 1859 onwards the annual number of sacks of 280 lbs. has been:—

1354

1860 ..	5,699	1870 ..	3,448	1880 ..	117,610	1890 ..	23,992	1900 ..	53,695
1861 ..	11,313	1871 ..	75	1881 ..	18,392	1891 ..	18,483	1901 ..	55,841
1862 ..	517	1872 ..	2,377	1882 ..	11,942	1892 ..	57,967	1902 ..	42,613
1863 ..	50	1873 ..	2,751	1883 ..	39,029	1893 ..	46,440	1903 ..	64,622
1864 ..	—	1874 ..	540	1884 ..	65,047	1894 ..	20,256		
1865 ..	140	1875 ..	2,114	1885 ..	67,114	1895 ..	32,146		
1866 ..	6,918	1876 ..	19,955	1886 ..	55,538	1896 ..	44,266		
1867 ..	16,080	1877 ..	14,099	1887 ..	9,758	1897 ..	61,145		
1868 ..	6,332	1878 ..	167,179	1888 ..	3,498	1898 ..	89,811		
1869 ..	257	1879 ..	138,377	1889 ..	22,994	1899 ..	43,190		

The enormous importation of flour ought to be checked, if by a duty the country would benefit largely by the milling being done at home. There is no other sufficient free market in the whole world for foreign wheat and flour, except Great Britain, if flour imports were checked we should have cheaper imported wheat, more employment of capital and labour in milling, mill engineering and all kindred trades, and also, as practically the whole profits now made on milling in this country are derived from the offals, such as wheat, bran, barley dust and oat dust, these owing to greatly increased production would fall greatly in price; a great advantage to the farmer, as he would be enabled to feed stock much more cheaply than at present, and would be able to combat the deluge of both live and dead meat that is dumped here. All grain should enter duty free, but all manufactured products from same, such as pot and pearl barley, oatmeal, flour and maize meal, &c., ought to have an import duty of at least 4s. per sack of 280 lbs. imposed upon them.

1355

G. COWAN, JUN., BRIDGE MILL, GLENLUCE, N.B.; Grain Merchant, Miller and Seedsman.

Nearly all foreign countries. Oatmeal, bean meal, Indian meal, oats, potatoes, &c. We have no chance with the foreigner, under existing circumstances; let us have fair trade all round. In this country hours of labour are fair, but railway rates are excessive, especially where there is no water competition. In many cases the foreigner is most unfairly favoured.

R. SHUTTE & Co., THE CORN STORES, RYDE, I. of W.; Millers.

At present I import Scotch rolled oats and cannot compete with American oats. The same with English wheat straw and meadow hay—we cannot compete with French stuff.

1356

W. PURVES, CASTLETOWN, THURSO; Farmer, Miller, Cake and Manure Merchant.

Canada, oatmeal; Russia, oats; U.S.A., Argentina and the Colonies, including Canada, beef and mutton. The above articles are poured into this country, and, where possible, sold as home produce. A virgin soil and no rent seem the chief advantages of the U.S.A. and Argentina. Our Colonies possess these, and in addition to that, we support an army and navy to protect them. The Colonies seem to have no taxes to pay beyond those equivalent to our local rates. Oats or barley cannot be grown at under £3 per acre, whilst the crop in 1903 did not realise 50s. Owing to importations no rise took place in consequence of failure of home crop.

KEMP, WALKER & Co., CITY CORN MILLS, ABERDEEN; Millers.

U.S.A. and Canada, oatmeal; Germany, pearl barleys. We are handicapped inasmuch as Germany ships her barleys to London and other ports and gets her goods in duty free, while if we send anything to Germany we must pay duty. We are able to ship our coarse barley thus to Germany, because they allow the coarse dust in duty free. There used to be 5 flour mills in Aberdeen, one in Keith, one in Inverness, and they have had all to close because of foreign flour, principally U.S.A. and Canadian, French and German, being dumped into Aberdeen.

1357

FORM No. 4,080. Miller.

U.S.A. sends oatmeal at some seasons of the year. Looking to it from a farming point of view, as I am as much a farmer as a miller, I consider dead meat is placed upon the British market below normal cost of this country.

R. W. MACADAM, WATTEN, CAITHNESS ; Miller.

We grind oatmeal for the home trade only, but we meet competition from U.S.A. and Canada.

J. BUBNER, AUCHNAGATT, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Miller.

Canadian oatmeal is usually sold here 2s. to 3s. per 140 lbs. under home article. Oats are also imported, but not in their manufactured state and chiefly from Russia, and when manufactured here are sold under the home article.

FORM No. 1,964. Miller.

U.S.A. and Canada send all cuts of oatmeal. Canadian oatmeal can be had at present 4s. to 5s. per 280 lbs. below our cost, delivered in Glasgow. Canadian oatmeal can be landed in Glasgow cheaper than we can produce it. Cannot say present price of American oatmeal, but it is certainly cheaper than Scotch, leaving tariff out of the question, with price in Canada and U.S.A. as at present, we would be at a disadvantage regarding price, although as already stated, the quality is considered superior. Raw material here costs more than in foreign countries, consequently we cannot produce the oatmeal as cheap, but, on the other hand, the quality of the home grain is much superior. Quality, in a great many cases, has to give way to price.

1358

FORM No. 2,758. Millers.

Canada and U.S.A. send oatmeal, rolled oats, and groats ; Germany and Holland, pot and pearl barleys and groats. It sometimes, but rarely, happens that Scotch oatmeal is cheaper at certain ports than Canadian or American. For instance, just now home oatmeal is cheaper at Aberdeen than foreign, but freight to London, Liverpool, or other large seaports of home oatmeal would bring the foreign in line with ours or below it. We have no information leading to above conclusion, but we are aware nearly all the American and Canadian Oatmeal coming to this country in bulk is sold to the consumers as Scotch or Irish.

R. GLASHEN, MILL OF BIRNESS, ELLON, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Oatmeal Manufacturer.

Oats and barley ; the foreign price is now equal to the home price.

A. McRAE, KIRKTON MILLS, DURRIS, ABERDEEN ; Oatmeal Manufacturer.

Canadian oatmeal is placed on these markets cheaper, chiefly owing to their longer hours of labour and cheaper production from the land, and not so much from the rate of wages, as they are in most cases better paid than in this country.

1359

J. & W. A. KENNEDY, POWBANK MILLS, PRESTWICK, Ayrshire ; Oatmeal and Grain Millers.

Canada and U.S.A. send oatmeal. This oatmeal is sold here at from 4s. to 5s. per 280 lbs. less than cost of our home oatmeal. Of course the difference varies. I have known it to be only about 2s. per 280 lbs., but the difference is always in favour of the foreign meal, being always cheaper. I have no information to offer, but, personally I am of opinion that oatmeal, as a rule, is not sold in this country below the normal cost of production in country of origin. I do not consider our trade suffers anything in respect of wages and hours of labour.

FORM No. 3,831. Corn Miller.

Canadian oatmeal is imported into this country and delivered carriage free at about £1 3s. per load, against ours at £1 10s. per load, a difference of 7s. without carriage anywhere. These prices vary according to markets, but this is about the selling price at present.

W. & G. BROWN, 14, DERWENT STREET, DERBY ; Flour and Oatmeal Miller.

Canada and U.S.A. send oatmeal. We have reason to believe oatmeal is dumped down in England at less than cost of production in America. By comparing price of oats in Canada and America and price of oatmeal sold here, we believe above statement to be correct.

1360

FORM No. 5,152. Millers.

U.S.A. and Canada send oatmeal, all kinds. The quality of foreign oatmeal is not so good as Scotch, but it is often used for adulteration and the mixture sold as Scotch, thereby giving users of the genuine article a bad impression. American and Canadian oatmeal can often be purchased cheaper in Glasgow and Liverpool than in the countries of origin, the British market being used as an outlet for surplus productions of the American and Canadian mills.

FORM No. 5,422. Miller.

Oatmeal, but there has been very little competition this season. Sometimes, however, there is very keen competition from oatmeal manufactured at home from Russian oats, also in flaked oats in packets and otherwise from U.S.A. A big trade formerly done in flour milling is now stopped owing to foreign competition from U.S.A., &c.

A. SUTHERLAND, MILLS OF CAIRSTON, STROMNESS ; Miller.

U.S.A. Oatmeal sold below our price.

**1361 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

**Flour and Oatmeal
—continued.**

W. ALEXANDER, BARSKIMMING MILL, MAUCHLINE, N.B. ; Miller.

Ours being only a country mill, our trade is local. I am of opinion the stuff sent from abroad is especially American: their oatmeal for example is put on Glasgow quay from 32s. to 36s. per ton cheaper than we can do the home article, consequently it is hurtful to us, as it leads to mixing and illegitimate trading. I would certainly be in favour of putting on a tax.

FORM No. 3,993. Corn Miller and Corn and Hay Merchant.

U.S.A. have undoubtedly ousted us with oatmeal from many oversea markets, and have made great inroads into our own. I do not consider the quality of American-made meal nearly so good as our own, but, in appearance, it far surpasses much that is made at home. They have a poorer raw article to work on, but in machinery for cleaning and labour-saving purposes, they are a long, long way ahead of us. By their fine cleaning machinery they make the most of their poor, raw, dirty article, whereas in this country the seeds of weeds are in many old-fashioned mills ground up along with the good corn in which they happen to be. The Americans also have much better labour-saving appliances than we have, but, in this case, the benefit to be gained by their introduction into a mill in this country would not, perhaps, repay initial cost, &c. Circumstances are different here, and they must always rule one's actions. There are times when home oats are dear, and foreign oats comparatively cheap, then the U.S.A. and Canada can send oatmeal, made from their own grown oats, to this country, and sell same at less than home millers can make meal from home-grown oats at. Of course the home-made meal is always the better quality when properly made, but I have seen American meal hard to beat.

1362

J. INGLIS & SONS, MID-LOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH ; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

United States and Canadian oatmeal and rolled oats. Rolled oats come into the United Kingdom under many names and brands, and these are extensively advertised, "as made under the British flag by British labour, &c." Many consumers are thus misled, and think that the article is of British manufacture. All the competition in the oatmeal trade comes from America and Canada, which countries are exporters, not buyers. All our other Colonies are buyers, except New Zealand. But the Scotch oatmeal trade suffers very severely, both at home and abroad, owing to transatlantic goods being dumped on our markets under the prices they are sold at in country of origin. Freight to South Africa for a large buyer are much lower from New York than they are from any port in this country to South Africa. We pay more than double what the American shipper does, consequently the export trade in oatmeal goods is being crushed out. We find that low grade oatmeal is imported into this country and mixed with Scotch oatmeal, and sold as "Best Oatmeal." This is a serious injury to honest home manufacturers and also to the agricultural interests of the country. If the Merchandise Marks Act could be put into force to stop this mis-description, there would be more demand and better prices to the farmer for his home-grown grain, and many of the idle mills would find trade. We have no information that the oatmeal, &c., sent to this country from the U.S.A. and Canada is below the nominal cost in country of origin, but those articles are sold at lower prices in this country than the consumers are charged in the country of origin for the same goods. We do not consider that any difference in the rates of wages or the hours of labour in foreign countries or the Colonies place us at any disadvantage in competing with imported goods such as we are interested in.

1363

W. EWING, THE MILLS, PORTSOY, BANFFSHIRE ; Miller.

I have many times known imported oatmeal being sold under my cost price.

J. EWING, MILL OF DURN, PORTSOY ; Miller.

Oatmeal is imported into our southern markets and sold at less price than it costs here.

STANFORD BROS., EDENBRIDGE ; Millers, Corn Merchants and Farmers.

Hay from America, France, Russia and Argentine, and beef from America and Argentine. Flour trade is killed by drier foreign flour and agricultural depression in fat stock, which cannot now be made to pay owing to the cheapness of imported foreign, the price being so reduced as to render it next to loss. The chief business of this description of mills was grinding corn for farmers' stock, but as the depression of prices occurred, our trade died out.

1364

Starch.

FORM No. 3,529. Millers and Starch Manufacturers, &c.

Starch, almost killed by foreign competition. The enormous quantities of potatoes imported from the Continent have lowered the price tremendously these last few years ; the dumping of such large quantities has almost put the Irish potatoes out of the English market. The hours of the labourer are much longer and the wages much less in foreign countries than at home.

FORM No. 2,709. Manufacturers of Indian Corn (Maize) Starch.

Maize starch. Owing to this competition we closed our works about 8 years ago, opened again in 1899 and worked for about 9 months, but owing to loss on account of the American dumping, we had to close again and have not been working since. We are ready to start at once should American competition stop, as the place is kept in order and machinery put on occasionally. We consider the U.S.A. send their surplus stock of maize starch to Great Britain, for whatever price they can get irrespective of what it costs them. Foreign manufacturers have done us a great deal of harm in the home market, also the U.S.A. We do not export much to the Colonies. Germany: Dextrines. We think Germany has a great advantage in having cheaper labour and the men working longer hours.

1365

A. CRAWFORD & SON, 20, MILL STREET, BELFAST ; Wheaten Starch and Corn Flour Manufacturers.

Germany. Some years ago a member of our firm was in Germany and found wheat starch sold there at about the same price as ours, while in England a similar starch was sold 25 % to 30 % less, in fact at a price at which it was found impossible to make starch, without reckoning profit at all.

Austria-Hungary. Above also applies in a stronger degree to Austria-Hungary, from which the principal competition comes.

America. Maize starch from America is offered so cheap that many people are tempted to use it instead of wheat starch. It is generally £4 to £5 per ton cheaper than qualities made in this country. We have at one time sent 1 or 2 considerable lots of our wheat starch to America, but although our starch was preferred to anything American, we had to relinquish the business as the duty amounted to at that time about 45% to 50%. It is we believe higher now. Our customers informed us they had to take inferior make seeing the price caused by high duty. We are pretty certain that wages are less in Continental starch works than in ours. Austria-Hungary, Germany, Belgium and U.S.A., all export to this country wheaten starch at prices which are killing our trade. The average price of Irish wheaten starch is about £20 per ton, while foreign wheaten starch is offered at our own doors at from £14 to £16 per ton. These are dumping prices, at which it is impossible to produce wheaten starch of fair quality without actual loss.

In 1891 we produced 1,400 tons of wheaten starch, while in 1903 we have only made 609 tons. This reduction in our output is almost entirely due to the market being flooded with cheap Austrian and German starches, which though not equal to our best qualities, yet on account of their cheapness are able to cut us out with many firms with whom quality is not a paramount consideration. In addition, the competition of these cheap starches obliges us to cut down our prices to a point at which for several years past our business has not been a paying one.

FORM No. 2,879. Starch Manufacturers.

U.S.A. We can often buy American starch cheaper than it can be manufactured here. Wages are as high in America as here, but the larger the quantity manufactured the less the cost. After supplying their own protected wants at a high price the overplus is from time to time shipped over here and sold under prime cost, consequently the manufacture of starch in this country has of late years greatly decreased. We are not aware that we are adversely situated in connection with the rate of wages paid in other competitive countries.

FORM No. 2,841. Rice Starch Manufacturers.

Rice starch from Belgium, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Holland. We know from invoices which we have seen, that Continental makers of rice starch sell in the United Kingdom below the normal cost of production. This may be accounted for in part by the high duties on starch into some of their respective countries, which enable our foreign competitors to obtain high prices for their product at home, and permit of their dumping their surplus stock here. Although it is difficult to give the actual figures, we know that the wages of men, women and children employed in Continental starch works are from 30% to 40% lower than those paid here, and this is confirmed by the figures given in the Blue Book, "British and Foreign Trade Industry, 1903," p. 291.

R. WILSON, JOHNSTONE & Co., LTD., ADELPHI STARCH WORKS, PAISLEY ; Starch Manufacturers.

Starch made from maize in large quantities from America at considerably under our cost price. We firmly believe the goods are sold under cost of production in country of origin. As we have been suffering for many years from Americans dumping maize starch into this country, we would like to have an opportunity of putting our case.

H. LEAKE & SON, LTD., OIL MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Seed Crushers.

Cakes and Oils.

Linseed oil and cake are most prejudicially affected by the dumping of foreign trade. Russia, Germany, U.S.A. & Canada, linseed cakes. Holland and Belgium, linseed oil. Owing to speculation the prices of imports have often no relation to cost price at all ; we have continually to work at a dead loss, and then cannot prevent the foreign goods taking the trade. A competing mill of very large size has been running for over 20 years at Bremen, sending a large quantity of its cake to this country. It is credibly reported never to have paid a dividend yet. Sales of oil and cakes are continually being made to this country at what they will fetch, but we have no means of knowing whether equivalent prices are being taken abroad.

As to hours of labour, we have no information, but we are credibly informed that the continental rate of wages is under ours, whilst large quantities of cotton cakes are now coming from Egypt, where they are made by workmen who are satisfied with a wage of under 2s. a day ; we are threatened with a similar importation of linseed cakes which we make, from the same source.

FORM No. 3,201.

Russia, linseed cakes ; Egypt, cotton cakes. Doubtless the scale of wages paid in foreign countries is one of the principal factors, enabling them to sell at such low figures.

THE EXORS. OF M. YOUNG, PALACE STREET, BEEWICK-ON-TWEED ; Seed Crushers and Linseed Cake Manufacturers.

U.S.A., Russia and Germany, linseed cake ; Holland, linseed oil.

A. WHITTET & Co., WEYBRIDGE ; Seed Crushers.

There is great competition in linseed cakes, which are imported in large quantities from U.S.A., Russia, Germany and Spain. During the past few years there have been large importations of cotton seed cakes from Egypt. Linseed oil comes from the Continent in considerable quantities, especially when prices here tend to rule high.

1366

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W. J. ROBERTSON & Co., LTD., WAVERLEY OIL AND CAKE MILLS, EDINBURGH ; Seed Crushers.

Germany, Russia and U.S.A.—linseed cakes ; Holland—linseed oil ; Egypt—cotton cakes. The above countries export large quantities of cakes, and often take prices it is difficult for us to accept. Some of the Continental countries that export cakes here have big duties on oil imported, consequently they get higher prices for their oil at home than we get here, and are, thereby, enabled to take low prices for their cakes exported. We understand wages in foreign countries are below what we pay.

OWEN PARRY, LTD., OIL MILLS, HYTHE, COLCHESTER & MILLWALL ; Oil Seed Crushers.

Continent and U.S.A.—linseed oil and cake imported here below our selling price.

W. GRAHAM & Co., HEADLEY OIL MILLS, GREENWICH, S.E. ; Oil Cake Manufacturers.

Germany and Belgium—oil and oilcake. U.S.A., Austria, Spain, Italy, France, Egypt, India and Russia—oilcake. It is common knowledge that prices are maintained abroad for such quantities of goods as can be consumed there and the surplus is dumped here at whatever it will fetch. The average price thus obtained is more satisfactory to the foreign producer than if he manufactured only the quantity required by his own country, the smaller quantity costing more relatively to produce than the larger.

FORM No. 4,970. Seed Crushers.

U.S.A., Germany, Russia, Egypt and France—cakes for feeding cattle. The seed is crushed in numerous countries, some of which are large producers of the seeds. The oil extracted is sold in their own country behind the wall of the duty—the residual product, cake for feeding, is thus obtained more cheaply than it otherwise would be, and comes on to this market—the United Kingdom—to enable the British farmer the more cheaply to feed his cattle. The farmer thereby benefits by foreign duties on oils. The British market is very largely supplied by foreign cakes below the normal cost of production in this country ; this is much to the benefit of British agriculture in fattening stock and keeping down the price of British-made cakes, the British seed crusher having to meet the competition as best he can when he buys in the open market, and he suffers consequently by that competition. Wages are reported lower, and longer hours per week are worked on the Continent.

FORM No. 3,652. Seed Crushers.

Russia, Germany and U.S.A.,—linseed cakes sold at 10s. to 20s. per ton below our prices, and shipped by their small vessels 400 to 500 tons all round our coast ports to markets formerly supplied by English crushers, and carried by our small coasting vessels. Cotton cakes—mills are now erected in Egypt. They are growing the seed and crushing it, and sending their cake, made by natives, in competition with English. They have no use for cake except to export. We formerly took nearly all their seed in England. A duty on cake would stop their mills and would not in the average make cake any dearer. As a rule foreign countries that send their cakes here are enabled to do so by the protected market they have for their oil. They sell the oil product, about 33 % at a high price in their markets, and export the cake product, about 66 %, to this free trade country in competition, while it is only by speculation that we can keep the mills going. There is seldom a working margin from January to December. The Germans work for less money, and do a very great deal more work. By the union of labour in this country the mill hands get more money than the crushers can afford.

W. GRAY & SONS, LTD., 35, HIGH STREET, HULL ; Cotton Seed Crushers.

U.S.A., Russia and Germany—linseed cakes ; Egypt, France and America—cotton cakes.

WRAY, SANDEERSON & Co., ECLIPSE OIL MILLS, HULL ; Seed Crushers, &c.

Egypt, Russia and U.S.A.—cotton and linseed cakes. They are able to undersell us from 5s. to 15s. per ton. The Russian and Egyptian labour is considerably less.

H. M. LEASK & Co., 14 to 19, SIR JOHN ROGERSON'S QUAY, DUBLIN ; Linseed Cake Manufacturers, &c.

Russia, Germany, Argentine, Canada and Roumania—linseed cake ; U.S.A. and Mexico—linseed cake and decorticated cotton seed cake ; Holland—linseed oil. All these countries can send their cakes here, and sell under our cost price, by £1 per ton. The only country we think that has longer hours of work and less pay is Russia.

FORM No. 3,336. Linseed and Cotton Cake Manufacturers.

None of our standard of purity but cheaper and commoner cakes are largely imported and affect the demand for cakes of English manufacture, owing to cheaper labour in foreign countries.

FORM No. 3,108. Corn and Cake Merchant, Brewer, &c.

Yes, owing to corn, cake, wool, and beef, being imported free from Russia and U.S.A. Example—Russian cake is sold at 20s. per ton less than cake of English manufacture.

THE CROWN CORN OIL CAKE & CHEMICAL MANURE Co., LTD., HULL ; Oil Cake and Chemical Manure Manufacturers.

Russia, France, Sweden, U.S.A., Egypt, India and Germany send linseed and cotton cakes from 5s. to 13s. per ton under our cost of manufacture. By having lost our oil market we suffer in a double way. Having their own market protected they undersell us, as they do not want the cakes they ship here, they are really to them a by-product.

1373

FORM No. 2,606. Linseed Cake and Cotton Cake Manufacturers.

Germany, Russia and U.S.A. Linseed cake of different qualities are shipped to this country and sold at prices considerably below what we are able to manufacture at.

TURNER, BLEWITT & Co., OIL MILL, BLACKWALL, LONDON, E.; Oil Seed Crushers.

Holland—linseed oil; Germany and Holland—rape oil; Germany and Russia—linseed cakes; Egypt—cotton seed cakes.

W. RAINEY & SON, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE; Merchants and Importers.

They don't injure our trade, as we import foreign cakes when better value than English make, but they injure the British crushers. Our trade in English-made cake is increasing at the expense of the foreign. The English crushers are putting down more machinery, and have "woke up" during the last 10 years.

BRADLEY BROS., DOVER, KENT; Millers.

The use of foreign-made oil cake tended to increase a few years ago, but owing to better manufacture of English recently, we consider the English makes are steadily regaining ground, and will do so if they keep their quality up. A feature of the trade is the large quantity of cotton cakes made in Egypt and Bombay now imported into England and Scotland.

W. & J. BUSHELL, GRANVILLE DOCK, DOVER; Grain Merchants, &c.

Linseed cakes from foreign countries are sold at 10s. to 15s. per ton lower than the same kind made in England. The British farmer benefits from this.

B. W. JONES, DINAS MILL, NEAR PONTYPRIDD; Miller.

Hay, &c.

My business is not interfered with much by foreign competition. Collieries in this district, which I used to supply, now use most foreign hay, principally French and Dutch.

G. T. JAMES, ESTATE OFFICE, HAMPDEN HOUSE, GREAT MISSENDEN; Farmer.

With regard to mixture of clover and grasses for London, this branch of farming paid fairly well on these hills when we could make £4 a ton on the farm in the ricks. With the present prices of about £2 10s. a ton it does not pay. We understand that the reason of the low price is the large quantity of foreign hay brought to London.

MUNGO GRAY & Co., 4, LLOYD'S AVENUE, LONDON, E.C.; Hay and Straw Merchants.

In general, no. The Continent rarely consigns, much less "dumps." Canada and the States do consign their surplus, but being unmanufactured goods, it is easy not to buy from the growers, and if there is a loss shown exports usually cease. There is no expensive plant to keep running. The import trade varies according to the seasons; a good crop in the British Isles reduces the import by bringing prices to so low a level that certain countries are shut out by the freights which rule by the lines to England. At the present moment nearly the whole Continent is shut out, France being practically our only supply in any considerable quantity for the south of England. Canada is the largest shipper to the north. The decrease continues in spite of such rates as 8s. and 10s. per 2240 lbs. from Canada; about the same rates rule from the Continent, but these do not fluctuate according to demand like the western ocean rates. With a poor hay and straw crop, as in 1882-84, enormous quantities would be poured in from all quarters.

F. NEAME, THE OFFICES, MACKNADE, FAVERSHAM; Hop Grower and Farmer.

Hops

The foreigner, having produced a surplus, throws such surplus on this market without regard to the cost of production. The following table will give particulars of hops dumped here to be sold below the cost of production. Note: the average price of hops should be 100s. per cwt., average foreign hops are less value than average English.

Date.	Hops Imported. Cwts.	Home Growth. Cwts.	Estimated Home Consumption. Cwts.	Average Price to Home Grower. Per cwt.
1880	195,987	440,000	686,219	68/-
1885	266,952	509,171	499,087	65/-
1886	153,759	776,144	485,623	41/-
1887	145,122	457,515	499,087	65/-
1889	200,690	497,811	511,514	48/-
1894	189,155	636,846	574,691	42/-
1895	217,161	553,396	565,687	41/-
1896	207,041	453,188	604,035	45/-
1897	164,154	411,086	610,751	55/-
1899	180,233	661,426	651,753	50/-
1901	116,042	649,387	649,903	43/-

The systematic dumping has resulted in the English acreage being reduced from 71,789 acres in 1878 to 47,938 acres in 1903. United States, Germany, Austria, France, Belgium and Russia send dried hops. Having our market open free to send any surplus they may produce, the U.S.A. and the Continent have gradually increased their production so that now their acreage is considerably in excess of their own requirements, so that with anything like an average crop have a considerable surplus, and England being the only free market, they dump down here without regard to the price ruling, having their own market secured to them by their

1374

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1376

**1377 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

Hops
—continued.

protective duties. It is of little consequence to them if they do so swamp this market so as to reduce the price below the cost of production, well knowing the great advantages that are likely to accrue to them through their further distressing the English producers. On the other hand, when our home crop is small, through an adverse season, they, by sending us their surplus, keep our prices below a remunerative figure to the producer, although owing to the full crop a large profit could be realised. When they have short crops, however, we are unable to avail ourselves of their markets because of their tariffs, and to these causes must be attributed the great reduction of the acreage of hops grown in England, which has fallen from 71,789 acres in 1878 to 47,938 acres in 1903, a reduction of 23,851 acres. It may be estimated that the displacement of rural employment from this reduction represents 8,000 men at constant employment, 2,400 men for 3 or 4 weeks in the year, 11,750 women for 8 to 10 weeks, and 129,000 women and children in gathering. Though there is reason to believe that the rate of wages in some of the competing countries is less than here, and the hours of work longer, I do not think there is cause to fear the competition on that ground, or a desire that protective tariffs should be exercised here on that account. Our growers and their men are able to contend with this, but not with the free importation of foreign produce.

See Blue Book of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, 1897. Hops were a few years since largely exported from England to California and U.S.A.; that has been entirely stopped by absolutely prohibitive duties, whilst the Californian and American hops have been still admitted here free, with the only and certain result that $\frac{1}{3}$ of the English acres have had to be grubbed and the labourers turned adrift.

1378

J. H. MEREDITH & Co., WORCESTER; Hop Growers.

When there has been a large surplus growth of hops on the Continent, our markets in England have been lowered by importations of German and Belgian hops, but so far as I am aware not at less prices than their value abroad. On the other hand when English hop growers have had a surplus crop, they have been unable to export in any quantity to the Continent, owing to the high duties imposed there, unless as in this season (1903) there has been an exceedingly small crop on the Continent, and even then the quantity of English hops exported has been by no means large.

W. H. & H. LE MAY, 67, BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.E.; Hop Merchants.

The free importation of foreign hops has caused the acreage under hops in England to be reduced from 71,789 acres in 1878—to 47,938 acres in 1903, a reduction, 23,851 acres. The foreigner having his own market secured to him, is enabled to send his surplus here without regard to the price ruling on this market; the whole of his surplus is naturally dumped here, and he is able to take full advantage of our short crops, and, consequently, higher prices, while we are not able to avail similarly of his market, in consequence of protective duties. In our opinion the average price for a given number of years would be higher in Germany and U.S.A. than here, because in years of moderate and short crops, their protective duties keep their prices up by preventing the more favoured countries dumping goods on their markets, while, on the other hand, when England has a moderate or short crop, they can take advantage freely of this market, and although by so doing they knock the price down here to what may be a non-remunerative price to the home producer, yet to them with their large crops, it may show a very handsome profit. It is not so much the loss of foreign markets we complain of (although no doubt we could grow hops to send abroad if it were not for the tariffs) as the gradual destruction of our home market; the present system gives our competitors their own protected market, and equal opportunities with us here and in the other markets of the world. It is impossible for the English producer to compete under the present system.

1379

D. H. GASKAIN & Co., 45, BOROUGH, LONDON, S.E.; Hop and Seed Merchants.

(Foreign imports) increasing, owing to shrinkage of (British) acreage in cultivation.

**Fruit, Flowers,
Vegetables
Seeds, &c.**

COLONEL G. W. RAIKES, C.S.I., ALCESTER, R.S.O., WARWICKSHIRE; Farmer.

Last year a local buyer bid me a low price for my potatoes, which I had refused; later on in the autumn his representative informed me that he had purchased 1,000 tons of German potatoes. The result was immediately felt all over our district, and our local potato market for the season was ruined by the transaction.

1380

R. SILBERRAD & SON, 25, SAVAGE GARDENS, CRUTCHED FRIARS, LONDON, E.C.; Nursery and Seedsman.

French growers sell their bulbs to the English market growers for the production of cut flowers, they then plant the surplus, and put the cut flower on the English market, at a price at which the Englishman cannot possibly turn out. Dutch growers send immense consignments of bulbs, plants and roses to auction rooms in most English towns, and let them go for what they will fetch. Foreign firms dispose of excellent plants at one-fifth of their prices a few weeks earlier for precisely similar goods. If the price charged to the ordinary wholesale trader is the cost of production with a reasonable profit added, one-fifth of that price must be far below the cost of production. Many growers in Belgium follow the same tactics with results equally disastrous to the English trader.

J. WALKER, THAME; Nurseryman and Seedsman.

The bulk of these enquiries does not affect me very much, but there is one matter that ought to be brought before you, and that is, the tendency of well-to-do and influential people sending to Holland, Germany, and elsewhere for bulbs, flower seeds, &c., to the detriment both of traders and themselves, i.e., British traders lose their profit and the buyers pay as much or more than they would if purchased at home from good reliable houses. All that can be said for this custom is that it is fashionable, but, to say the least, it is very unpatriotic.

1381

FORM No. 10,326. Seed Merchants.

Trees, shrubs and bulbs are sent here from Holland annually and sold at a much lower price in the markets than they will sell to us wholesale. A Dutch firm, from whom we have bought for many years, and who were supposed to be wholesale only, have this year supplied London parks with bulbs in preference to the London merchants. Roses are largely imported by this country from France, Holland, and Germany, and are on the increase, owing, no doubt, to cheap-class stuff, far inferior to home-grown. Flowers from South of France have, during the last few years, increased, being produced cheaper under actual conditions than they can be grown artificially here.

GEORGE BUNYARD & Co., LTD., MAIDSTONE; Market Gardeners.

No; the shoe pinches rather more in the way that many supply the retailer at the same prices as the wholesaler, and thus cut out the home dealer, even in some cases paying carriage on retail goods while the wholesale man has to pay his charges.

FORM No. 10,188. Seed Merchants.

The Dutch bulb merchants are sending thousands of Dutch bulbs to every auctioneer in England, and completely spoiling our bulb trade.

LITTLE & BALLANTYNE, VICTORIA VIADUCT, CARLISLE; Seed Merchants.

There is a tendency to increase importation of foreign-grown produce, probably to the extent of 10 %. The surplus supplies of Germany and Canada are brought over here and sold by auction merely to clear. They have ruined agriculture, crippled landowners, and, consequently, affected all classes of trade in country districts.

COOPER, TABER & Co., LTD., 90 AND 92, SOUTHWARK STREET, LONDON, S.E.; Seedsmen.

Imports are increasing considerably owing to the means they have of getting goods grown more cheaply than they were previously able, and being better informed as to what is wanted. Owing to cheaper labour and climatic influences, imports from Germany are increasing rapidly.

C. R. CLARK, THE SQUARE, RETFORD, NOTTS.; Seed Grower and Merchant.

Dutchmen are dumping bulbs, trees and shrubs on our market, and it is absolutely impossible for them to be grown at double or treble what they make here; they have ruined entirely my (and many other seed merchants') bulb trade, and are fast doing the same with nursery stock. They swamp our markets every week with goods that are sold by auction at ridiculous prices.

SIMONS & Co., CANDLERIGGS, GLASGOW; Fruiterers.

Increases (of importations) are general. It depends on the seasons.

GOODWIN & Co., 75, CHEAPSIDE, LIVERPOOL; Fruit Merchants.

The increase in the proportion of foreign fruit is greater than that of British grown. Bad weather in England is, in our judgment, the principal cause.

FORM No. 10,306. Market Gardeners.

Foreign-grown seed is increasing; labour is cheaper on the Continent, climate is better. The last two excessively wet harvesting seasons have made us very chary about contracting for growing seed in England. German growers will contract to deliver seed peas, hand picked, i.e., all weathered corns sorted out by hand, and the sample dressed ready for sale, whereas the English growers will not do this, and it has to be done by the merchant, sometimes when samples are had at considerable loss, whereas the foreign growers take this risk.

FORM No. 3,777. Cider Merchants, &c.**Cider**

American cider is offered at any price from 5d. per gallon upwards including casks. This, however, is not below cost price, for the reason that it is not a natural cider at all, but a synthetic cider. Thus the American takes 33½% of apple juice, 66% of water and adds Hamburg spirit at proof, with a few grammes per litre of citric or tartaric acid. He then has a cider which costs about 3d. per gallon, and as he pays no duty on his alcohol he really receives a bounty of about £3 per 100 gallons. This appears to be a case for enforcing the adulteration laws.

1384

W. PULLING & Co., DISTILLERY, HEREFORD; Gin Distillers and Cider Makers.

U.S.A., cider. This year, 1904, cider can be bought at 8d. or 9d. shipped from the States; if pure it cannot be made under 1s. per gallon.

W. GAYMER & SON, ATTLEBOROUGH, NORFOLK; Apple Growers and Cider Manufacturers.

We only manufacture cider, and we find that free importation from U.S.A. materially affects us. American cider is very largely imported into this country, and this year particularly, at a considerably less price than we can produce a similar article from imported Canadian apples. Cider from imported apples costs us from 25% to 35% more than that offered by an American firm. We are also handicapped by railway charges, the freight from our stores to London being quite double the amount for the same quantity of cider from New York to London. In the event of our buying this American cider at 6d. per gallon in New York, bottled here and shipped back to New York it would there meet a duty of 1s. 8d. per gallon.

**1385 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

Cider
—continued.

W. A. HAWKE & SON, DARTMOUTH, DEVON ; Cider, Flour Merchants, &c.
Cider—great competition with U.S.A. cider, which is sold at a very low price.

ROBERTS & WILSON, IVINGHOE, TRING, HERTS. ; Cider Pressers.

The U.S.A. cider has cut our profits down to a loss. At the same time if we could not have bought foreign apples this season I don't know what we should have done ; however, they have nearly all come from Canada.

THE ASTON FRUIT FARM CO., STONELEIGH FRUIT FARM, ASTON, INGHAM, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Fruit Farmers.

Our flower and fruit trade suffers keenly from Continental competition, but more from climatic causes than wages and hours of labour. The markets are full of foreign produce by the time we can get ours there, which causes prices to drop to the bare cost of production and railway carriage.

Beef, Mutton, &c.

J. HARE, BALK MILL, THIRSK ; Miller and Farmer.

Butter, wheat, fat beasts, and pork pigs have often to be sold below cost price owing to the great supply coming in every now and then, or continuously from the Continent and America.

WM. GALE, KNOSSINGTON ; Grazier.

There is no manufacture in this district which foreign competition would affect. I think the foreign competition as it is at present will ruin the farmers and graziers of Ireland. We can hardly cash our stock unless they are very well finished.

W. ASPLIN, CHURCH STREET, AMBLESIDE ; Butcher and Bacon Curer.

U.S.A.—Chicago-killed beef. The above is brought into this place weekly at a cost of 3d. per lb., while home-fed cattle are costing 6½d. per lb. I cannot manufacture at the price foreign goods are imported at, but my goods are much better.

FORM No. 4,876. Corn Dealers.

The only way in which we feel foreign competition is indirectly, that is to say, farmers cannot realise a price on their fat stock on account of butchers being able to buy foreign cattle at a less rate ; also butter and eggs, &c. We should have a much larger turnover if it paid our customers to fatten stock ; as it is, the price of foreign meats makes it unprofitable.

C 1,263. Estate Agent.

Our sheep farming industry in the Highlands has for many years now been much depressed, chiefly from the U.S. tariff wall against our wool, and free importation of mutton. Owing to great difficulty in re-letting sheep farms at otherwise than extremely low rents and sometimes the impossibility of letting them at all, many sheep farms have been converted into deer forests within the past 12 or 15 years. Thus the very persons who in Parliament object to deer forests do actually, by upholding the existing Fiscal Policy, contribute to the multiplication and extension of deer forests.

C 118.

This district is considered one of the finest grazing areas in the United Kingdom, but the local farmers are severely hit every autumn by the large supplies of beef and mutton (live and dead) imported from abroad.

FORM No. 10,554. Foreign Merchants.

It is generally understood that the large U.S.A. meat companies ship their surplus supply of beef mostly in a chilled state to this market in order to maintain a higher level of prices in the States. This beef amounts to about 15% of the estimated total consumption in this country, and at times, in competition with other descriptions, sells at low prices, certainly to the detriment of New Zealand.

THE COLONIAL CONSIGNMENT AND DISTRIBUTING CO., LTD., 15, DOWGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C. ; Frozen Meat Dealers.

The importations of U.S.A. "chilled" beef referred to, are a very practical instance of "dumping," although it must be borne in mind that U.S.A. beef meets a demand in this country which it would be difficult to satisfy otherwise. The necessity for speedy disposal often compels this meat to be sold at less than cost price here, and bears no relation to the value of the meat in its home market. It is admittedly a surplus exported to keep up prices in the home market.

G. RODDICK & SONS, 16, WATER STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Brokers.

Large quantities of cattle, sheep and beef are sent here and sold by Americans at much less than current prices in America, and 30% less price than such meats can be produced in this country. Current prices for foreign cattle and dressed beef average 2½d. or 4½d. per lb. The same class cannot be produced in this country under 6d. wholesale. The prices for foreign cattle, sheep and meats are lowered or raised in this country by the weekly arrival, not by the cost of production or freight.

W. WHISTON, LANGLEY, MACCLESFIELD ; Farmer.

New Zealand mutton has put a stop to the keeping of sheep, and Argentine beef has lowered the prices to such an extent that a farmer can only realise about half price for his turn-off stock after milking. More stringent regulations as to the adulteration of foreign cheese and butter are necessary.

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G. A. HARRISON, TWEED HOUSE, BERWICK-ON-TWEED ; Farmer.

I am largely interested in the slaughter of sheep for the London market. My average for the last 20 years is about 45,000 carcasses of mutton. Foreign competition (River Plate, Dutch, New Zealand and Australian mutton) has almost rendered my business unremunerative, owing principally to the very cheap rate at which it is carried by railway companies that have a through rate from landing ports to London.

FORM No. 2,223. Bacon Curers.

Bacon and Hams

U.S.A., Canada and Denmark—both bacon and hams, but the quality is not so high and they are sold at lower prices than our home meats. We are frequently told by shippers that American bacon and hams are being sold in this country below their cost in America. Previous to about 20 years ago we cured considerable quantities of home-fed meats which were sold to a large extent in London to exporters who, we believe, sent them chiefly to British Colonies in the southern hemisphere and to India and China. The rest of our cure was sold at home, chiefly in the manufacturing districts in the north of England. Since that time foreign, more especially American, meats have much improved in quality and have been low in price and have to a large extent taken the place of home meats. This has caused us to stop preparing goods for export and has practically driven us out of the manufacturing districts as traders. But in so far as the more local trade is concerned the effect has been to increase rather than diminish our output, as we are enabled to give our buyers a really good article in American meats at much lower prices than we could ever afford to sell the home product at. It seems to me that these results have been brought about by there being no import duties on goods similar to ours coming into this country.

FORM No. 1,913. Bacon Curers.

U.S.A., Denmark, Russia, Sweden, and Canada—bacon, hams and lard. Have reason to believe that in many cases goods are placed here below the normal cost of production in country of origin.

C. & T. HARRIS & Co., LTD., CALNE, WILTS. ; Bacon Curers.

Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Canada, &c. : Bacon, in 1902, £13,427,000 ; Hams, in 1902, £3,859,000 ; Pork, in 1902, £1,752,000—total £19,038,000.

J. W. CLARKE, MALTON, YORKS. ; Bacon Curer.

U.S.A. and Denmark—bacon and ham. Provisions are sometimes sent to this country and sold at a price for which they cannot be produced, thus demoralising the English market. We cannot produce hams or bacon at the price they are sent here, at any time, but our produce will at all times command a higher price than foreign on account of its superior quality.

FORM No. 3,922. Bacon Curer.

Denmark—bacon and lard ; Canada and U.S.A.—bacon, hams, and lard. Considerably below our cost of production, but we have no definite knowledge that same would be below the cost in the country of origin. Denmark and Holland have made large inroads into our bacon markets, and in fact captured them to the exclusion of the United Kingdom. We suffer much from foreign competition caused by unrestricted free imports.

H. S. CASE, TROWBRIDGE, WILTS. ; Bacon Curer.

Denmark, Russia and U.S.A. send us bacon, cured. The general appearance of this imported meat causes it to be easily distinguished from the home cured and fed. The flavour also is a means of distinction. The grinding of flour in foreign countries causes the offals, or residue of the grain, to be much dearer here. These offals, such as bran, pollards, sharps and such, can be obtained by the growers of meat in these foreign countries at a price less than its real value, because of the excessive stock. This places the grower of meat in England—the purchaser of these offals, or feeding stuffs—at a great disadvantage. If all flour used in this country were ground here, feeding offals would be obtained at a much lower price than at present.

HILLIER'S BACON CURING CO., LTD., NEWMARKET, NEAR STROUD ; Bacon Curers, &c.

Denmark, U.S.A., Canada and Russia—bacon, hams and lard. At the present time the manufactured article, both bacon and lard, is being sold in this country at less money than we are paying the English farmer for live hogs. This has brought about a very heavy fall in English hogs during the last few days. We gather from the market reports appearing in the Trade papers that foreign shippers are complaining that the bacon and lard cannot be made at the prices it is now being sold at on the open market. Denmark is our chief competitor, and wages there are generally somewhat lower, and working hours longer than in England ; but their chief advantage lies in the lower cost of feeding pigs. Owing to the restrictions on foreign flour over there all the milling is done on the spot, and millers' offals are consequently cheap and plentiful. We may add that our trade suffers chiefly from the Danish bacon being retailed simply as " best," and unless English bacon is specifically demanded by a customer, the foreign article is usually substituted for the sake of the extra profit. The lower prices of the inferior foreign article seriously interfere with the sale of superior British goods.

FORM No. 5,787. Bacon Curers.

Bacon, principally manufactured by Danish and Swedish co-operation, imported in large quantities and placed on the market at open prices. American bacon affects us to a much less degree than Danish. Our trade is largely handicapped and limited from the reasons stated in the question, viz., lower wages paid and longer hours worked in Denmark and Sweden, and we believe that under the Government arrangements technical information is freely given and railway rates and ocean freights made easy, so that, for instance, the cost of transit from Denmark to London would not exceed the cost from Wiltshire to London by rail.

COUNTY CAVAN STORES, LTD. (T. PADDOCK), CAVAN ; Manufacturers, &c.

U.S.A. bacon is usually sold in this country at a price far below what it could be profitably fed and turned out at.

**1393 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

W. ORAM & SONS, CARLISLE ; Ham and Bacon Curers.

We are frequently advised by American shippers that U.S.A. and Canada export ham, bacon, lard, &c. below cost of production.

**Bacon and Hams
—continued.**

A. MARSH, BRIERLEY HILL, STAFFS. ; Ham and Bacon Curer.

U.S.A., Canada, and Denmark send bacon, ham and lard, all below cost price of English. Have no information that such imported articles are placed upon the British market below the normal cost of production in the country of origin, but these articles are surplus products of the countries named, the consumption there being quite inadequate for the quantities produced. Have no particulars of the rates of wages or hours of labour in the countries competing in articles of production similar to my own trade, but I do not apprehend we suffer unduly in this respect.

FORM No. 3,963. Ham Curers.

We do not experience any competition from foreign countries. English hams, bacon, &c., are so much superior to the foreign and Colonial that they sell at much higher prices. It is doubtful if in any case the working man would be able to pay the high price of English meat, and were it not for the enormous importations of foreign and Colonial bacon he would probably have to go without his morning rasher. Australia, Canada, U.S.A., Holland and Denmark: hams, sausages, bacon, fresh pork, are all imported into this country, but being usually much inferior to the home product, command much lower prices, and are principally eaten by the working classes, the home produce being reserved for the wealthier classes. We should say that all bacon and hams imported into this country yield good profit to the curer. It is a well-known fact that the principal curers in Ireland have factories also in Denmark and America.

FORM No. 10,576. Bacon, Butter Merchant, &c.

In our particular case the proportion (of British made to foreign made) has not varied to any appreciable extent, but taking the trade as a whole the production of Irish bacon has been steadily diminishing for the last 20 years, until last year, when there was a slight increase, whereas the Continental production has increased more than fourfold. Canadian has also increased enormously, and American is still very large. Denmark, being a purely agricultural country, has to throw all its energy into the production of bacon and butter (beef no longer pays there), and the only outlet for these exports is the U.K. It seems that pigs can be produced there more cheaply than in England or Ireland, and the same is the case both in Canada and the U.S.A. The restrictions in the movement of pigs on account of swine fever would seem to have had a deterrent effect upon feeders in England; this has resulted in a largely increased export of pigs from Ireland to England, which has reduced the quantity available for the Irish curer. In consequence, considerably fewer men are employed and the cost of producing bacon is raised.

**1395 Butter, Cheese,
Eggs, &c.**

WILSON, KERR & CO., 26, BREAD STREET, EDINBURGH ; Provision Merchants.

U.S.A. and Canadian cheese as well as New Zealand, Australian, Dutch and others come in and certainly tend to reduce the sale of home cheese, as unscrupulous dealers in the retail trade substitute them for home cheese. Margarine and butter are sent over here in the smallest quantities weekly, direct to the towns at distance from the port of arrival, at through rates, which we cannot get here. They thus get the trade without paying rates, taxes, rent, or doing the duties of citizens of Great Britain. They may become our enemies after we have fattened them.

FORM No. 3,859. Farmers, Stock Breeders and Dairy Produce Manufacturers.

Denmark, France, Holland, Russia, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, send us butter; and Canada, U.S.A., Australia and New Zealand, beef and mutton. There is no denying the fact that butter is being placed on our markets cheaper than we can possibly produce it in this country. Butter is the article of our manufacture in respect to which we experience keenest foreign competition. Our price for milk and cream continues fairly satisfactory. We have to take, on the other hand, quite 16% less for butter than we did 10 years ago. Our dairy cows when fattened for the butcher bring quite 30% to 40% less than they did 15 to 20 years ago. Breeding ewes when similarly sold bring also considerably less money. Cow beef and ewe mutton have to compete with foreign supplies, and are over-borne in a way that prime beef and mutton are not. There can be no doubt that Denmark is able to manufacture more cheaply on account of lower wages paid to employees, and the same remark applies to Holland, France and Russia.

C 720. Dairyman.

I send large quantities of milk to London and elsewhere. During these last few months milk has been pouring in from abroad and thrown a glut of English milk on the market, and unsaleable at a profit. I will never have anything foreign in my dairy, and I find that it is the rich and better class people who buy the foreign articles and not the working class. I will not say that it is not a great deal the farmer's own fault that thin butter has not a ready sale from its not being uniform in quality, but at the same time the enormous imports of milk, butter and eggs free of duty cripple us dairymen very much. Butter making in European countries is made by lower paid labour than I am obliged to employ. Butter reaches this country from British colonies who give bounties on the export of butter. Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Holland, British Colonies and United States butter and bacon. U.S.A. have made only small impression on English butter market, Holland more considerable. Swiss condensed milk is injurious to sale of fresh English milk to a considerable extent.

FORM No. 3,921. Dairyman.

Canada, U.S.A., New Zealand and Australia send us cheese and butter. We believe the foreign goods to be sold here at a profit. We suffer much from foreign competition caused by unrestricted free imports.

1397

C 1,822. Dairyman.

According to the Russian Inspector of Agriculture Siberian butter is made under filthy conditions. Siberian butter is manipulated, put into Danish casks and exported from Denmark to England.

W. H. JENKIN, CONSTANTINE DAIRY, PENRYN, CORNWALL; Dairyman.

Denmark, Holland, Norway, Lombardy, Brittany and other countries, send butter. When the foreign butter comes in my orders from big English towns cease, as the buyers say they can get butter from 1d. to 2d. per lb. cheaper, namely, good Danish, Lombardy, &c.

PARRETT & AXE VALE DAIRY CO., CREWKERNE, SOMERSET; Dairymen.

Butter, cream and cheese are imported. What we hold is that the foreigner should pay a suitable tariff on such goods as part and parcel of a sound business arrangement. It is ridiculous that the foreigner should be allowed to exploit our markets without paying his way if we are not to have free trade all round. In the case of butter, cream and cheese the imposition of a tariff would not appreciably affect the price of such articles to the consumer. The foreigner would pay the tariff and the law of supply and demand would regulate the price. Britain receives the surplus supplies of dairy produce, and the imposition of a 5% tariff would not be prohibitory. If the home producers and manufacturers pay heavy rates and taxes to the revenue of this country for the privilege of being in trade, why, in all fairness, ought their foreign competitors not be made to contribute an equivalent in the shape of a tariff on all manufactured goods sent by them into this country? Given a fair field and no favour the Britisher fears no competition.

1398

WIGTOWNSHIRE CREAMERY CO., STRANRAER, WIGTOWNSHIRE; Dairymen.

From Holland and Denmark, butter and cheese are very frequently sold at a price below what we could produce them for. Wages are lower and hours of labour longer in foreign butter and cheese producing countries such as Holland, Denmark, &c.

FORM No. 6,392. Dairy Farmer.

Canada, U.S.A. and Holland. All imports are at less price and keep our prices down. Rents and taxes are lower in every country which competes with us.

ELLIOTT & SONS, 20, FORE STREET, BRIXHAM, DEVON; Dairymen and Farmers.

All farm production. As a rule our men work less hours and demand higher wages, not caused by foreign competition, but by Gladstone's franchise.

CLEPHAN & WIENCKE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE; Merchants.

There can be no question that the foreigner obtains more at home for his manufactured goods than he does for the surplus exported, indeed, much more. You will find the retail price of Danish butter dearer at Copenhagen than at London. Foreign made goods steadily increasing. The main reason is the underselling by the foreigner, who has now an excellent organisation on this side.

1399

FORM No. 10,311. Dairymen.

British-made goods are increasing owing to better manufacture.

FORM No. 10,399. Butter Merchants.

The proportion of percentage of foreign imported butter has been decreasing with us for some time on account of our extended business with Ireland and the Colonies—Canada, &c.

FORM No. 2,520.

Foreign imports hurt me as regards prices of corn, cattle, butter, eggs and fowls.

F. J. NATHAN & Co., 10-11, MINCING LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Merchants.

Butter is only very occasionally sold under cost price to get into a market. Whenever we hear rumours of this we try to buy ourselves, but have never been successful. This would apply to other trades than ours—chiefly partly-manufactured goods. They are usually "quotations without engagement," and holders only sell to those whose buying will serve some ulterior purpose.

1400

M. UNDERHILL & SONS, 7, HIGH STREET, OXFORD; Merchants.

Cheese and some "American" bacon come from Canada. Canadian cheese has almost ousted American from the London market, because it is considerably better quality. It needs no differential duty to give it a "preference" over American cheese. There have been rumours of American and Canadian syndicates being about to open provision shops throughout England. If more than moonshine, the English grocer thinks that he is capable of taking care of himself. The trade in Siberian butter has become very large indeed within the last three years, so is the trade in Australian butter and in that from Argentine. The butter from these countries cheapens Danish butter, but does not displace it; but it takes the place of Irish butter, and of French butter to a considerable extent. Very few English farmers, none that I know of round Oxford, are capable of making fresh butter that people can eat. The best English fresh butter is now made in factories—I get my supplies from Devonshire and Somersetshire. We used to sell Italian and French fresh butter. English has now quite replaced it, because of its better quality and lower price.

1401 Foreign Competition E. BLAKEMORE & SONS, LTD., 7-10, SALOP STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON; Merchants.

In the Home Market

**Butter, Cheese,
Eggs, &c.
—continued.**

The proportion of Danish butter is considerably increasing, to the detriment of Irish. We cannot definitely state the proportion, but it is very considerable. Recently the sales of English bacon have increased very considerably, and the sales of American have somewhat decreased. We attributed this to the fact, that owing to the operations of the "Swift Syndicate" of bacon packers in America, the price of their goods has considerably increased, while the price of the English has remained almost stationary. English cheese has suffered very considerably, and the trade is almost a shadow of its former self, but whether American or Canadian cheese has taken its place we cannot definitely say. As far as we ourselves are concerned, our Colonial friends the Canadians are almost our only sellers. We consider Canadian cheese better than American generally.

J. KEITH, 84-86, CADZOW STREET, HAMILTON, N.B.; Merchant.

Continental butter is replacing Irish and Scotch, due to cleanliness, quality and regularity of supply, in summer and winter. There is an evident attention paid on the Continent to breeding of cattle, so as to produce "a crop" of milk all the year round, and special attention is given to cleanliness of packages and texture of butter.

1402 STEPHEN BROS., 10, KING STREET, GLASGOW; Egg Merchants.

Proportion of foreign goods is diminishing, but not greatly. Irish shippers are paying better attention to our requirements.

C. MARSTON, ROLLER MILLS, EARSHAM, NORFOLK, AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK; Millers, &c.

As regards bacon, eggs, butter and poultry, these have largely affected the home trade and kept down their profitable production.

FORM No. 5,150. Dairymen and Corn Dealers.

A good many American middlings are imported, which bring down the price of the English made. Hay and straw also are imported, which makes the English-grown very low priced.

A. H. KINGSLEY, BOURNE ORCHARD, HERTFORD, HERTS.; Farmer.

1403 The great influx of Danish and Australian butter is continually lowering the price of the local butter. I ought not, however, to complain of this, as, thanks to my dairy people, I can always sell more butter at 1s. 6d. per lb. than I can make.

Margarine and Lard C 1,771. Margarine Manufacturers.

During the 12 months ending 31st Dec. last 960,278 cwts. of margarine, valued, for Customs purposes, at £2,494,497, were imported from the Continent, mainly from Holland, a large proportion of which is intended for use by public institutions, such as unions, asylums, &c. All this margarine could be produced in this country by the existing factories, which are fairly numerous, but owing to the existing conditions, the foreign factories are able to undersell the British ones, and in many instances to dump on the market large quantities of cheap stuff at prices lower than those obtained in the country of origin. Margarine manufacturers of the U.K. goods are entirely shut out of all European countries and the U.S.A. by high protective duties.

FORM No. 2,098. Margarine Manufacturers.

As we buy raw materials under the same conditions and in the same markets as the Dutch firms, facilities for manufacture are therefore the same in both countries; but we know from our own calculations of cost of manufacture, that in many cases the Dutch firms are selling in this country at 5s. per cwt. under cost of production. Dutch firms pay their men about half the wages that we pay, in addition to which they have no restrictions regarding hours of labour, which, as is well known, are longer than in this country. The whole trouble in our business is that there is an enormous quantity of foreign margarine sold in this country at below cost price in the country of origin. The only way of preventing this is by imposing a heavy import duty. There are sufficient home margarine factories to supply all the requirements of Great Britain, and thus naturally the more foreign margarine is sold, the less trade there is left for the British manufacturers. The great handicap British manufacturers have in colonial markets is that foreign manufacturers all advertise the fact that British margarine is only allowed to contain 10% butter-fat, whereas their margarine has no such restriction and consequently is supposed to be of much better quality. Our returns show that in 1903 there was a great falling off in trade, owing to the enormous extra quantities of foreign margarine sold, through dumping, at a loss. Our plant is capable of employing practically double the number of workers we did employ during that year.

FORM No. 2,998. Margarine Manufacturers.

Holland is our principal foreign competitor for margarine, and owing to the firms there who compete with us, having large factories in Germany (a heavily protected country) they, the Dutch manufacturers, are enabled to make large profits in Germany, and use Great Britain as a dumping ground for surplus. On many qualities of margarine they must lose fully 5s. per cwt. through this dumping, but of course, the profits they make in Germany and Holland cover the loss on the goods made in Holland and exported to Great Britain.

DAVID JONES & Co., SLATER STREET, LIVERPOOL; Merchants and Margarine Manufacturers.

1405

Margarine is not imported to any extent but could be owing to lower wages, &c., in Holland. Margarine imports into England amount to 17,000 cwts. from Holland weekly, on the whole at a good profit to the manufacturers. Some is sold cheap in order to cut out English manufacturers; on the whole the Dutch have a large profit. Owing to our factory being in Liverpool, we estimate that margarine is sold here by Dutch houses 10% lower than in any other English town.

1st.—From rate of wages, which we are told by our Dutch manager is only about $\frac{2}{3}$ of what they are here. 2nd.—By hours of labour, which are only $\frac{2}{3}$ of what they are in Holland. 3rd.—By price of milk, 3d. per gallon here, 1d. per gallon in Holland (same time of year). 4th.—Further he tells us rent, rates and taxes are considerably higher here than in Holland. 5th.—Transit rates to any part of England is much in favour of Holland. 6th.—Income tax: the Dutch avoid this by their system of invoicing at a higher figure, say 60s. when they only expect to get 56s., &c., which at end of year shows loss—or dumping—which is not true.

THE MAYPOLE DAIRY CO., LTD., GODLEY, HYDE, CHESHIRE; Margarine Manufacturers.

Holland sends us margarine. Raw materials chiefly come from America. When Germany and Belgium put duty on margarine, Dutch manufacturers erected works in those respective countries, employed local labour and used local milk supplies. Our trade is subject to adverse competition from Holland, in consequence of the cheaper labour in that country and the longer working hours.

1406

FORM No. 2,343. Margarine Manufacturers, &c.

Germany, Holland, Denmark and France send us margarine. Continental manufacturers of margarine, not being restricted as to the quality of their productions as we are, and selling behind tariff walls, are able to dump their goods here under their normal cost price, though we have equal facilities for buying raw materials. They are also able to make large profits in South Africa and other markets, by assiduously advertising that British makers are unable to offer really fine margarines, owing to the restrictions of the Margarine and Food and Drugs Acts. This assists them in dumping here under normal cost. Dutch manufacturers have all large factories in Germany, which give them the advantage of a protected market.

Wages being much lower and hours of labour much longer on the Continent, manufacturers there have been able to turn out the same goods as we do at lower prices. Freedom from restrictions on manufacturing have also been in their favour.

FORM No. 2,295. Margarine Manufacturers.

Holland, Germany, Norway and France send us margarine. This is an article, every ounce of which could be manufactured in this country, and which would give an enormous impetus to farming owing to the immense amount of milk required for the process. It would mean something like 2,500 tons of milk per week required, for which the farmer receives $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the money he could possibly make out of butter or cheese. Foreigners cannot buy cheaper than we can. We have their prices for raw materials constantly before us as a check to our prices, but owing to most of the Dutch factories having German factories also, they get the benefit of a higher price in the protected area and can manufacture larger quantities, thus reducing on cost, and place large quantities on our markets below cost to keep their factories running night and day. The 10% butter fat restriction here also assists them in the same direction, as it lets them out us in neutral foreign markets. Hours are everywhere longer. Wages are not $\frac{2}{3}$ of ours. We are over inspected in every way; it handicaps the home employer when foreign workers have no restrictions as to hours, &c. Our railway companies also give preferential rates to sea-borne traffic.

1407

J. WALLACE & Co., LTD., ROWALLAN CREAMERY, KILMARNOCK; Margarine Manufacturers.

Most of the large makers in Holland have margarine factories in Germany, where they make for the German trade, and Germany being a protected country large prices are secured, with the result that they can afford to dump their goods here. In many cases, especially with the cheaper grades, they are selling under cost prices, to the serious loss not only of the manufacturers here, but of the agriculturists as well. If all the margarine used in this country was manufactured here, it would be a most material advantage to the dairy farmers, as it would require an immense quantity of milk for its manufacture. Owing to the protected market makers in Germany have, they are able to sell at lower prices here than can be taken for goods manufactured in Britain. Our trade is subject to adverse competition from foreign countries owing to lower wages paid and to longer hours worked. Further, our trade suffers from a peculiar restriction that exists in a large part of England, especially London and the surrounding counties, in that a large number of rate-supported institutions have printed on their schedules "Foreign makers' brands only." These schedules no doubt were drawn up previous to the margarine industry being taken up in this country, but the British feel it a hardship now that their make is equal, if not superior, to anything in the world, that foreign makers only should have the opportunity of estimating, and especially for rate-supported institutions. The Continental makers have the advantage of home makers in the export trade, and with this advantage it enables them to more easily dump the goods here. Further the U.S.A. have shut the export market against us in the Philippine Islands by their preferential tariff.

1408

FORM No. 5,610. Margarine Manufacturers.

The selling prices of cheap margarine by Dutch competitors on the British market are at times so low that they actually only represent to me the bare cost of materials used, without taking into account labour, carriage and sundry expenses. Our hours of labour are shorter, rates of pay higher, and general conditions better than in foreign competing countries. The restrictions of the Factory Act and Workmen's Compensation Act must be borne in mind, there being no equivalent in operation in most foreign countries. Further, margarine factories in this country are subject to specially restrictive legislation under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1899.

**1409 Foreign Competition
in the Home
Market**

**Margarine and Lard
—continued.**

Whilst not wishing to impute that foreign manufacturers deliberately contravene such laws, it must always be remembered that should their product not comply with British legislation, our authorities have no redress against such foreign factories. The chief competing country is Holland, which exported to the U.K. last year, 831,193 cwts., value £2,316,354. I may add that the margarine industry in this country is an important one, the manufacturers being fairly numerous.

FORM No. 3,702. Lard Refiners.

Raw lard is imported in tierces of about 300lbs. each, and its value should be about 2s. per cwt. below the price of refined lard in pails, yet for reasons better known to themselves the Americans glut this market with refined lard in pails at prices below the cost of raw. If they have too much of the raw article, let them send it here for us to refine it. Competition amongst English refiners here will keep the price down. U.S.A. refined lard imported in 28-lb. wood pails or buckets, also lard in tins for re-export. The pail or bucket is also a manufactured article, and tells against the makers of iron buckets at home.

N. KILVERT & SONS, LTD., TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER ; Lard Refiners.

American refined lard is constantly sold here at prices below the corresponding cost of the raw material, and we believe at lower rates than are asked for the article in the home market in the States. The cost of labour is, we believe, greater in the States than in England. We are convinced that the low prices ruling in this country are due to the practice on the part of the U.S.A. packers (or refiners) of unloading their surplus product here and so keeping their cost of production low. This refers also to American refined lard, which competes with us in the colonies. We can offer no other explanation for the enormous increase of American competition. We are an old-established firm, but our refinery is the most modern in the world and is electrically equipped with the latest machinery and plant. Our facilities on the Ship Canal are perfect, and we have no lack of capital.

C 2,003. Bacon Curers.

We are offering lard at actually less money than it costs us. We are paying 48s. per cwt. for prime pigs, the leaf or flick being included in the weighing, and years ago the lard was a source of considerable profit, but you can gather the present position from the fact that we are this week selling it at prices varying from 39s. to 50s. after refining and bladdering it, the loss in weight, cost of labour, and the bladders, being all so much loss. We may say that American lard is offering at 38s. per cwt., and Danish at 42s. As regards the amount imported, we can inform you that the total weight of lard imported from all sources during the week ending August 27th was 25,593 cwts.

**1411 Foreign Competition
in the Colonies**

(G) FOREIGN COMPETITION IN THE COLONIES.

QUESTION 9 (FORM I):—What is your experience in respect of foreign competition in the Colonies in your trade?

T. BOYD & Co., 28, KING STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Merchants.

It is well known that the Americans are offering and selling their goods in Canada at much below the prices paid in their home market.

FORM No. 2,841. Rice Starch Manufacturers.

Our experience is that the same dumping goes on there, and the fact that steamers will take goods for the Colonies from the various continental ports at much less freights than we have to pay from London, places us at a disadvantage.

FORM No. 2,212. Millers.

Our experience is that protected countries export their surplus to our Colonies just as they do to England at considerably lower prices than they would be able to sell at, if their home trade were not secured to them by high tariffs. In this respect our trade with the Colonies is similarly effected to our home trade—it is only a question of degree.

R. B. MUGLESTON, LITTLEBURY MILL, ONGAR, ESSEX ; Farmer and Miller.

I experience losses on fat cattle, wheat, flour and feeding stuffs through foreign competition. Why are not foreign flours, &c., analysed as English have to be, and labelled if not pure?

FORM No. 4,850.

Foreign competition in the Colonies (especially that of Germany) has greatly increased during the last few years, a great impetus having been given to it by the foolish Merchandise Marks Act. It is one thing to defeat and punish fraud, quite another to publish to the whole world the origin of goods. To deal in and ship foreign goods (in addition to English) is looked upon as sin, and goods have had to be branded "made in Germany." In consequence, native and Colonial buyers, have naturally sent their orders direct and the goods are shipped direct from Hamburg and other ports without coming to England at all. People then seem surprised that our shipping has gone back and that German makers have followed up their advantage and obtained a firm footing in our own Colonies with their cheaper goods. The Germans are likewise greatly assisted in having a State railway, their goods are conveyed as "Ausfuhrgut" at $\frac{1}{2}$ of the cost of what it would be here in England; our railways having to pay their shareholders a good dividend.

1413

C. & T. HARRIS & Co., LTD., CALNE, WILTS. ; Bacon Curers.

American bacon (finished off in England and sent out as "British produce") monopolises the South African market (see Mr. Birchenough's Report, Blue Book, page 113). This applies more or less to all our Colonies and dependencies.

J. L. GRAY, ELGINHAUGH MILLS, DALKEITH, N.B. ; Miller.

Have had extremely slight experience of Colonial trade, but understand that Germany is becoming a formidable rival in some Colonial markets—S. Africa for instance.

A. MARSH, BRIERLEY HILL, STAFFS. ; Ham and Bacon Curer.

Do not think we suffer much in the Colonies ; it is only the wealthy can purchase our products and the poorer class benefit by a cheap supply of provision.

FORM No. 2,343. Margarine Manufacturer, &c.

Since the passing of the "Food and Drugs Act" Continental manufacturers have captured Colonial and Eastern markets by advertising that British makers are prohibited by law from making fine margarine, and that consequently they alone are able to offer fine goods.

1414

J. WALLACE & Co., LTD., ROWALLAN CREAMERY, KILMARNOCK ; Margarine Manufacturers.

Our experience of foreign competition in the Colonies since the last Margarine Act was passed, has been most unsatisfactory, being seriously handicapped by the clause restricting the addition of butter-fat to 10 %. Our foreign opponents have advertised all through the Colonies that by the laws in Great Britain, the manufacturers there are not allowed to make first-class margarine owing to this limitation. Copies of the Act have been circulated showing to the customers that this is the case, with the result that it is a very difficult matter for British manufacturers to hold their own in their own Colonies. This is a point deserving serious consideration, as it is a most unfortunate thing that the home industry should be thus handicapped in the competition in our Colonies. The restriction is an absurd one, as it is the only industry in the world where the maximum quality is fixed, and it is of the most vital importance if Colonial trade is to be retained, that this restriction should be at once removed.

FORM No. 2,295. Margarine Manufacturers.

Trade has been practically killed by the Law in operation here which prohibits margarine makers from mixing more than 10 % of butter with margarine mixtures. The foreign maker has no such restriction in his own country, and has advertised the fact all over the world that the British maker cannot now make mixtures as formerly, which has dealt a serious blow at the trade. Otherwise we could compete quite favourably in the Colonies, and if they had not our home market to send their output to, we could more than compete against them.

1415

FORM No. 3,702. Lard Refiners.

Our experience is that the Americans will not let us get in. They have taken from us the French and Spanish trade, the West Coast of Africa, Cape Town and South Africa, also Gibraltar, Malta and Italian trade. At the price they are selling, they cannot possibly make money. Their object seemingly is to starve out the English refiners, so that American refiners may later on have it all their own way. 20 years ago there were 6 lard refineries in Liverpool ; to-day there are but 2. 20 years ago we employed 200 men, now we employ considerably less.

HILLIER'S BACON CURING CO., LTD., NEWMARKET, NEAR STROUD ; Bacon Curers, &c.

The U.S.A. are largely securing the South African trade.

1416

FORM No. 4,113. Dealers in Butter, &c.

U.S.A. previous to the recent tariff was a severe competitor in bacon and hams in S. Africa and Australia, the competition now seems less in S. Africa.

FORM No. 4,970. Seed Crusher.

America chiefly supplies Canada when America's surplus production needs an outlet.

N. KILVERT & SONS, TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER ; Lard Refiners.

In our opinion the U.S.A. does practically all the Colonial lard trade.

J. INGLIS & SONS, MID-LOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH ; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

Our South African export in oatmeal has been practically stopped by the "Quaker Oats Company" of Iowa, U.S.A., whose goods are advertised as of British growth and manufacture.

QUESTION 12 (FORM VIII.), QUESTION 9 (FORM II.), QUESTION 10 (FORM II.), QUESTION 7 (FORM I.):—

Please give any instances of loss or partial loss of any foreign markets through the operation of foreign tariffs and regulations. What general conclusions have you arrived at as to the effect of the Customs regulations and tariffs of the foreign countries with which your principal trade is carried on? Has your export trade suffered in recent years by the operations of the tariff of any country? If so, please state your experience? Have the trades similar to yours in Germany, the United States, Belgium or other foreign countries, made any inroads on any markets hitherto largely supplied from the United Kingdom, in any branch of business in which you are engaged? Give such particulars as you can.

JOHN WALLACE & Co., ROWALLAN CREAMERY, KILMARNOCK; Margarine Manufacturers.

U.S.A. Tariffs

Our export trade has suffered much in recent years by the operation of the tariff of other countries. The following is an extract from a letter received from Havana only recently: "Please note we do not expect that you will be able to place more of your margarine here. The Reciprocity Treaty with the United States is now in force and this allows butter, margarine, &c., 30 % reduction in the tariff for goods coming from America. Under these circumstances we hardly think it will be possible for us doing further business in your goods." This is one letter amongst others received from the various Islands in which this Reciprocity Treaty is now in operation.

1418

FORM No. 5,152. Millers.

Many millers did a large trade with U.S.A. in oatmeal at one time, before the tariff was put on.

FORM No. 1,942. Oil and Cake Manufacturers.

The export of linseed oil to nearly all European countries and to America, is almost prohibitive, in consequence of tariffs.

SIMONS & Co., CANDLERIGGS, GLASGOW; Fruiterers.

Exports to the U.S.A. from Europe have fallen very considerably owing to the high tariff.

LITTLE & BALLANTYNE, VICTORIA VIADUCT, CARLISLE; Seed Merchants.

The market for seed potatoes in the U.S.A. is almost debarred by a high protective tariff. At one time there was an extensive business done, but it now, practically speaking, amounts to nothing. We want tariffs in the same ratio as those against us.

1419

FORM No. 10,570. Seed Merchants.

The exportation of seeds to the U.S.A. would be a large business with us but for the fact that there is a duty of 30 % to pay by the buyer. Even this does not prevent our being able to export some seeds at a rate which, with the freight and 30 % duty, totals less than the cost of production in the States owing to expensive labour on that side.

HERMAN GOSSCHALK, LTD., 40 & 42, TOOLEY STREET, LONDON, S.E.; Butter Merchants.

That the import duties in U.S.A. and France levied upon articles of food prevent a regular trade being carried on, as the bulk of the population cannot afford to pay the prices thus artificially raised.

FORM No. 10,306. Market Gardener.

We tried to export peas to U.S.A. a few years ago, but were prevented by the tariff.

GEORGE BUNYARD & Co., LTD., MAIDSTONE; Market Gardeners.

The McKinley tariff has not affected my particular trade, but in Surrey it has killed the export of rhododendrons, roses, clematis, which used to be a flourishing trade to the U.S.

1420

GLOVER, HILL & Co., LIVERPOOL; Fruit Merchants.

Exports to U.S.A. show a considerable decline, perhaps 20 %; this is due to the U.S.A. McKinley tariff. Since it came into operation our sales to America have been very limited owing to the exorbitant duty levied by the U.S.A., whereby we lost a good profitable market. This has certainly lessened British cultivation and consequently affects labour.

J. INGLIS & SONS, MID-LOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

There is a demand in the U.S.A. for best quality of Scotch oatmeal, but the tariff practically shuts our goods out of that country. Generally our goods cannot afford to pay any tariff rates whatever, as the high quality of Scotch-grown oats makes them higher in price than the oats grown in any other country in the world. In U.S.A. and Canada the raw material is about one-half the cost of Scotch oats (grain).

FORM No. 4,663. Seed Crushers.

Seed oils exported to Russia, 19s. 6d. per cwt. duty; linseed oil to U.S.A., 10d. per gallon; cotton-seed oil to U.S.A., 2d. per gallon (7½ lbs.). In consequence of the high duty on oils into Russia and the U.S.A. they are enabled to undersell us on the home markets, whereas if there were a duty on cakes imported into this country it would enable us to compete with them, and find more employment for the workpeople of this country.

1421

PLUNKETT BROS., BELLE VUE MALTINGS, ISLAND BRIDGE, DUBLIN ; Maltsters.

We can do very little trade in America or Germany owing to the operation of protective tariffs.

FORM No. 5,787. Bacon Curers.

Continental Tariffs

Our export trade is so limited that our experience is not perhaps worth much. But on small quantities of our goods to Switzerland we have to get a sworn declaration as to the character of the goods, which has to be signed by the Consul in London, costing before we start the goods from here 4s. to 5s. per cwt. on small bales of 1 cwt. This is simply an illustration of the difference between our own and Continental methods. We exported limited quantities of bacon to Germany and Switzerland, but this is hampered and limited by the heavy charges and close scrutiny before reaching destination ; foreign-cured meats are admitted into this country without let or hindrance or any inquisitorial questions.

FORM No. 10,407. Grain Merchants.

Bulk of our trade being done as " Importers " the taxes scarcely affect us ; however, we are considerably damaged by the foreign tariffs preventing us exporting coals, salt, &c. France and Germany were large buyers of wheat, but under present tariffs there is very little done. Canadian grain is now practically excluded from Germany.

1422

F. LLOYD & Co., NELSON STREET, LYNN ; Grain Shipper.

The foreign tariff on English grain makes trade quite out of the question. Oversea trade to near countries is quite gone, i.e., France, Belgium.

FORM No. 10,299. Market Gardener.

We believe that we could send a limited quantity of certain fruits and vegetables to France and America with profit were it not for their tariffs and regulations.

FORM No. 10,056. Egg and Butter Merchants.

At certain times of the year we should be in a position to do a profitable business in eggs with France by exporting foreign eggs shipped to the Port of London, to France to supply their shortage, but their hostile tariff prevents us. Of course this is obviously unfair as we are pouring millions into their coffers for their food produce, but can receive nothing back by way of reciprocity, being debarred by the tariff wall from trading. Having lived in France for several years I have had opportunity to compare their system with ours, and am bound to say that the burden of taxation seems to hang very lightly on the Frenchman, who does not notice the paying of indirect taxation. The effect with regard to the Customs tariffs in France is that the foreign trader is quite shut out, with the exception of spurious German-made cutlery got up for the eye, but valueless, marked " Sheffield cutlery."

1423

R. WILSON, JOHNSTONE & Co., LTD., ADELPHI STARCH WORKS, PAISLEY ; Starch Manufacturers.

French tariffs have put us out of their markets. We have lost other foreign customers through the low-priced starch dumped into this country.

FORM No. 3,702. Lard Refiners.

We have lost the export trade we had with France and Spain. If we had reciprocity no doubt we should get back the trade which was taken from us by the Americans.

FORM No. 2,606. Linseed Cake and Cotton Cake Manufacturers.

Linseed oil in Germany is 80s. per ton dearer than in this country, but oil cannot be exported from the United Kingdom to Germany owing to a tariff of £3 or £4 per ton.

MUNGO GRAY & Co., 4, LLOYD'S AVENUE, LONDON, E.C. ; Hay and Straw Merchants.

All protect their subjects in every possible way against England. As an instance in our own trade, there is an import duty on hay in France, but chemicals which are necessary to its production on their own soil, and of which they cannot produce sufficient themselves, enter free. Chemicals other than for agricultural purposes are protected by tariff duties.

1424

WOODS, SADD, MOORE & Co., LODDON, NORFOLK ; Millers, &c.

In former years it was a common thing to ship wheat to France. This has been stopped by the import duty that has been put on.

FORM No. 10,554. Foreign Merchants.

Owing to the operations of tariffs and regulations, New Zealand has not succeeded in placing her frozen meat on the French and German markets, which otherwise would offer a remunerative outlet. Efforts have repeatedly been made to overcome these difficulties, but without success.

FORM No. 3,963. Ham Curer.

The little export trade we do to France has not suffered through tariffs, although the tariff is rather heavy ; but the better quality of the English goods enables them to stand the tariff and yet find a market in France.

FORM No. 10,534. Seed Merchant.

Foreign tariffs in many cases prevent our seed crushers and other manufacturers from exporting their products to such countries, while we allow the foreigner to ship his oil, &c., made with cheaper labour, and for which cheap freights are obtainable, to this country, and to sell it here at the prices ruling for the same articles made with dearer labour. The foreigner thus makes very considerable profits in this country, on which he pays neither rates nor taxes (including income tax) as the British manufacturer has to do. The general conclusion we have arrived at with respect to Foreign Customs Regulations and tariffs is, that they protect the labour of their respective populations, and will not allow any article to be imported free on which labour has been expended. In our opinion the same principle should be adopted by this country; otherwise our industries must gradually be killed. The Russian and other Continental markets were entirely lost for British oils some years ago, when the respective governments imposed an import duty on oil, while the raw seed, from which the oil is made, continued to be admitted free of duty, so that the oil-making industry, which formerly flourished in India and elsewhere, was to a large extent killed. During the last ten years it has repeatedly been proposed to impose an import duty in France on a particular kind of oil seed, the bulk of which is grown in India. So far no duty has been imposed, but the question has now again cropped up, and we are informed by our Marseilles agents, that several deputies are of opinion that this time the duty will be voted, and they are of opinion that it will be very heavy. As France takes by far the largest quantity of the particular seed in question, such duty would come directly out of the pockets of British subjects in India.

FORM No. 10,326. Seed Merchant.

There is a great difficulty in sending any trees or plants to Austria; there appears to be great difficulty at the far end in the delivery, even if you have sworn to a declaration before a J.P. in this country. To Holland we are unable to send out goods at the same rate as they send out goods from Holland to this country.

J. H. MEREDITH & Co., WORCESTER; Hop Growers.

Not being an exporter, am unable to say from personal experience, but from information obtained from other business men during 40 years, I have formed a very strong opinion of the injury inflicted on this country by German and American high tariffs—and the bad effects of our present system of free imports of goods which we can grow and manufacture.

THE COLONIAL CONSIGNMENT & DISTRIBUTING Co., LTD., 15, DOWGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.; Frozen Meat Dealers.

The export of frozen meat to Continental countries has been rendered impossible through the operation of tariffs and restrictive regulations. The introduction of frozen meat has been attempted on many occasions, but in most cases the opposition of the agrarian interests has prevented the establishment of a regular trade. At the present time there is a strong popular demand for Colonial frozen meat in Austria but the importation is prohibited by the Imperial Government, in spite of the fact that the Vienna Town Council are strongly in favour of the prohibition being withdrawn.

G. P. McKEEROW & Co., 28, BRUNSWICK STREET, LIVERPOOL; Merchants.

The only instance which affects us is a spasmodic trade with Spain. When the crops are poor there the tariff is generally lowered, and a good trade results, which is stopped when the tariff is raised.

SHAW, SON & Co., 45, HIGH STREET, HULL; Grain Merchants.

Formerly we imported largely oats and barley from Sweden, into which country foreign wheat was imported in considerable quantities. Some 10 or 12 years ago Sweden imposed a heavy duty on foreign wheat imports and the result would appear to be that the Swedish farmer now grows wheat to a great extent in place of barley and oats.

FORM No. 2,212. Millers.

Our export trade in flour is deprived of its natural growth because the heavy duties imposed by foreign countries prohibit us from competing on equal terms.

FORM No. 2,295. Margarine Manufacturers.

We have been absolutely unable to export margarine on account of the tariffs. The home trade would be enormous if it were reserved to home manufacturers as we have many facilities as any country in the world.

THE CROWN CORN OIL CAKE AND CHEMICAL MANURE COMPANY, LTD., HULL; Oil Cake and Chemical Manure Manufacturers.

We suffer from the duty on oils; whereas some years ago we exported largely; we cannot now touch their markets on account of high tariffs, some varying from £6 to £9 per ton.

FORM No. 2,098. Margarine Manufacturers.

It is impossible to do a profitable margarine trade in protected countries, producing the same article.

W. RAINEY & SON, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE; Merchants and Importers.

On the Continent, owing to tariffs, oil is dear, and therefore the foreign manufacturer, as he can make more of his oil than the English crusher, and can buy his linseed at the same price (there is a duty, but he gets a drawback for export), can sell his cake, which is the residue, so much cheaper. The English crusher grumbles, but the English farmers, who outnumber the crushers in a proportion of 1,000 to 1, benefit at the expense of the foreign public. Our general conclusions are—Let each country produce what it is best adapted for producing. If there are two countries, "A," which is adapted for producing wheat and not at all adapted

for producing linseed, and "B," which is just the reverse, and suppose one man, by working a year in "A," can produce £100 worth of wheat, or £50 of linseed, and in "B" can produce £50 worth of wheat, or £100 of linseed; if each country, by excluding the products of the other, grows its own wheat and linseed, it will produce £75 per man; if they exchange by free trade, each country will obtain £100 per man, apart from minor considerations, such as freights, &c. The moral is obvious.

1429

CLEPHAN & WIENCKE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE; Merchants.

Foreign tariffs have practically killed our export trade, at one time very lucrative and extensive.

FORM No. 10,474. Merchant.

That they are a distinct hindrance to the extension of trade, and where hostile tariffs are in force, for purposes other than revenue, we consider that counter-duties should be imposed in order to bring about a more reciprocal state of affairs.

C. V. JACKSON, CORN EXCHANGE, NORTHAMPTON; Farmer.

Exports—almost prohibitory. Imports—unduly favoured against home producer.

W. & J. BUSHELL, GRANVILLE DOCK, DOVER; Corn and Grain Merchants, &c.

The writer has been a merchant for the past 14 years, and there is no doubt that present tariffs enable us to buy cheap, but before that he was for 25 years manager of one of the largest oil mills in England; that mill had to close owing to foreign competition. Heavy duties are imposed on oil by foreign countries. Abroad they obtain so high a price for oil, in consequence of these duties, that they can sell the residue cake at such a low price as to secure control of the English markets, and the use of cake in England is very large. It must be borne in mind that the British farmer is greatly benefited by all this, and if he is to pay more for his oilcake, he should be protected by some fair means.

1430

T. BOYD & CO., 28, KING STREET, LIVERPOOL; Merchants.

Owing to foreign tariffs, our exports have immensely decreased, thus causing us to seek business in entirely new channels. The conclusion we have arrived at is that it is utterly ridiculous for us to allow the U.S. to place any tariff they choose on our goods, and at the same time allow them to send over the same goods (if it suits them) free of duty.

FORM No. 5,610. Margarine Manufacturers.

The foreign countries to which margarine can be exported are exceedingly few in number, as in the majority of them margarine factories already exist, with which it would be useless for a British factory to compete, owing to high protective tariffs. In the Colonies, one has to take into account the lower rates of freight from foreign ports than from British; this applies particularly to South Africa.

1431

FORM No. 3,652. Seed Crusher.

We crush linseed, which we import from India, the Argentine, Russia, North America, &c., which makes two products—oil and cakes. The oil is sold to the home trade, also exported; formerly we exported linseed oil largely to U.S.A., Germany, and other places, but they commenced high tariffs against us for oil, which protected the new mills they erected, sending their cake production to this country (free of all duty), and they were able to buy their seed in competition with us, crush it, and afterwards sell their oil in their own protected markets over our prices, and send their cake here free, to the detriment of the seed crushing of this country and the thousands of men employed. Had we retaliated when they imposed duties on our oil by putting an equal duty on their cake we should have been making several hundred thousands tons of cakes (we now import about 400,000 tons to the United Kingdom), thus finding extensive employment for our people. When countries increase their tariff against us, they usually do so when they have a good stock, and this causes a drop in our market price; when it drops to equal the duty imposed, they commence to buy again, thus they pay the duty, and we take the lower price to enable them to do it. It is in this way we are contributing to their revenues in almost every thing we export. They pay the duty out of the exporter's pocket.

L. WILSON, THRIMBY MILL, PENRITH; Miller.

No doubt we suffer very much through what is called Free Trade, but there is very little freedom for our trade abroad.

1432

FORM No. 10,233. General Merchant.

The markets which have adopted tariffs have practically killed our exports to them.

A. WHITTET & CO., WEYBRIDGE; Seed Crushers.

The export trade in linseed oil has been practically extinguished during the past 10 years by the operation of Continental tariffs.

OWEN PARRY, LTD., OIL MILLS, HYTHER, COLCHESTER AND MILLWALL; Oil-seed Crushers.

Twenty years ago virtually all our linseed oil was sent to the Continent. We have not exported anything for years.

THE CEREALS COMPANY, LTD., GREENOCK; Manufacturers of Flaked Maize, &c.

Owing to prohibitive tariffs we have never had any export trade to foreign countries.

G. OLDEN, SHERFIELD MILL, ROMSEY, HANTS; Miller and Corn Merchant.

The country has in many ways undoubtedly suffered from the effects of foreign tariffs.

1433 Foreign Tariffs and their effect

Continental Tariffs --continued.

TURNER, BLEWITT & CO., OIL MILL, BLACKWALL, LONDON, E.; Oil-seed Crushers.

A flourishing export trade, in linseed oil and refined cotton-seed oil, to the north Continental and Mediterranean ports has entirely disappeared.

EAVES & KING, LTD., 17 & 18, EXCHANGE BUILDINGS, LIVERPOOL; Linseed and Cotton-seed Crushers.

We are informed by merchants in Egypt that the German and Belgian linseed oil has made great inroads on their markets. Our exports of oil have much decreased, in consequence of frequent increases in foreign tariffs against linseed oil. All the countries named below send their cake into this country to compete with us.

				Foreign Import Duties—					
				Linseed Oil.				Cotton-seed Oil.	
Germany	..	..	..	2s.	0½d. per cwt.	..	..	5s.	1d. per cwt.
								(New duty, 6s. 4d.)	
France	..	..	..	2s.	5½d. "	..	..	2s.	5½d. per cwt.
Russia	..	..	..	19s.	6d. "	..	..	19s.	6d. "
U.S. of America	..	..	..	12s.	6d. "	..	..	2s.	6d. "
Italy	..	..	..	2s.	9d. & 10s. 7d. per cwt.	..	..	9s.	9d. "
Canada	..	..	..	25	% (ad valorem)	..	..	20	% (ad valorem)

The approximate values f.o.b. Liverpool to-day are:—Linseed oil, 18s. per cwt.; cotton-seed oil, 2s. per cwt.

T. TOWNROW & SONS, LTD., HIPPER CORN MILLS, CHESTERFIELD; Millers.

It is impossible to export the articles of our manufacture owing to the foreign tariffs.

FORM NO. 2,343. Margarine Manufacturers.

We have never been able to surmount a tariff wall.

E. W. BROOK, THE MILL, CHARSFIELD, WICKHAM MARKET, SUFFOLK; Miller.

Our trade has suffered.

BUSCK & CO., 66, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Corn Merchants.

The exports of bran have fallen off, as prices here have been high compared to other feeding stuff exported from Denmark. Before France put duties on grain, we imported largely wheat and oats from France immediately after harvest, partly because their crops were available earlier than ours, partly because French farmers used to thresh all grain at once and, therefore, from want of money and of store-room were cheap sellers early in the season. The duties in France improved the position of farmers and increased the acreage in cultivation to such an extent that France now, in ordinary years, grows enough wheat, oats and meat for the home consumption, and for several years the price of wheat, notwithstanding the duty of about 12s. per qr., has only been 3s. to 4s. dearer than here, and this year oats were cheaper in France than here. In Denmark, on the contrary, free imports of feeding stuff have improved the position of the Danish farmers, as they keep a larger stock of cows and pigs per acre than any other country, and get a good return for their butter, eggs, meat and bacon. Nearly all their pigs are turned into bacon at a minimum cost, the farmers having their own joint dairies and slaughter-houses in every district within easy reach from the farms, which lessens cost, and gives more uniform quality.

R. S. SIMPSON, PRESTON; Butter Merchant.

Foreign tariffs do not interfere with us.

J. DOUSHON, JUNR., STOCKTON-ON-TEES; Merchant.

The wholesale grocery and provision trades are free from the influence of foreign tariffs.

R. SILBERRAD & SON, 25, SAVAGE GARDENS, CRUTCHED FRIARS, LONDON, E.C.; Nurserymen and Seedsmen.

Plants, seeds and bulbs being admitted free of duty into most countries, tariffs do not affect them.

FORM NO. 10,550. Grain Merchants.

Foreign customs' tariffs do not affect the grain trade, as the business is almost entirely an import one, and foreign tariffs are always paid by foreign buyers.

N. KILVERT & SONS, TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER; Lard Refiners.

U.S.A. have now a practical monopoly of the lard trade in foreign countries. Years ago we did a trade with France and Spain, but this has ceased.

JOHN MUNDY & SON, ECHT, ABERDEENSHIRE; Millers and Timber Merchants.

We are quite unable to export meal and flour as the foreigner sends cheaper.

H. LEAKE & SON, LTD., KING'S LYNN OIL MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK; Seed Crushers.

Germany, Belgium, Holland, &c., have largely met the export trade for linseed oil to all parts of the world.

1434

1435

1436

(i) EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURAL MANUFACTURES, ETC.

Employment
in Agricultural
Manufactures, &c.

1437

QUESTION 7 (FORM III.) AND QUESTION 10 (FORM VIII.):—*Has the importation of foreign-made goods into British markets affected the conditions of employment in your trade? Please give particulars. Taking 1903 as an example, can you give any particulars and figures as to the loss of employment in your establishment due to the importation of goods you could have manufactured?*

S. N. KEYES, DAREN FLOUR MILLS, DARTFORD, KENT; Miller.

In 1903 we imported about 8,000,000 sacks of flour or 1,000,000 tons; this meant a loss to the country of over 400,000 tons straw and sharps, &c. This probably displaced the number of men employed by 50,000. I should have employed quite 20 more.

WILLIAM ASHBY, WHATLINGTON MILL, BATTLE S.O., SUSSEX; Miller.

I used to manufacture 1,000 quarters of wheat yearly for home trade, then employed 5 men at a cost of wages £325 yearly; now my trade is reduced so that I only employ 2 men, wages £104 yearly. The new system of milling and the depressed state of agriculture has been partly the cause of the country mills coming to a standstill.

FORM No. 2,709. Manufacturers of Indian Corn (Maize) Starch.

1438

Had there been no importation of American Indian corn starch or German dextrine, we would have had employment for double or treble the number of workpeople.

GRASS VALE DAIRY CO., WHEATSHEAF YARD, ST. STEPHEN'S STREET, NORWICH; Dairy men.

Danish butter knocked out some of our employees who would have been engaged in producing and distributing English produce. Foreign condensed milk reduced the sale of English fresh milk; we have 30 employees and may fairly reckon that 3 are displaced by above influences, perhaps more.

FORM No. 3,262. Millers.

If raw material (wheat) were imported instead of the finished article (flour) we could have done half as much trade again, could have employed several more men, and could have cheapened cost of manufacture.

HIPWELL & SONS, STOKE MILLS, SHARNBROOK, BEDS.; Millers and Corn Merchants.

If a sufficient growth of English wheat were encouraged and a check put on the importation of foreign flour by a duty, we could run our mills 24 hours where we now run only 15. Our output would increase accordingly, and extra labour be required in proportion both for manufacture and delivery.

WILSON, KERR & CO., 26, BREAD STREET, EDINBURGH; Provision Merchants.

1439

No (loss of employment), excepting that the butter and margarine trade has been greatly diminished by foreign competition, and we employ 1 or 2 men less.

FORM No. 4,938. Millers and Flour Manufacturers.

During 1903 our men were employed only three-quarters of the time.

F. PEARSE & SON, THAERSTON MILLS, BY LONG STRATTON, NORFOLK; Millers.

If we could send flour to London, we should go night as well as day.

W. B. MARRIOTT, FISKEETON, R.S.O., NOTTS.; Miller and Corn Merchant.

I now run 12 hours per day; if fully employed 24 hours per day.

C. A. HODSON, HUNSTON, CHICHESTER, SUSSEX; Miller.

My water mill is practically closed—very little doing. My wind mill is quite closed and partly pulled down, consequently 2 men are discharged and the miller's cottage is empty, which makes it none the better for a village.

J. FOWLER, EAST & WEST MILLS, BRIDPORT; Miller.

1440

Yes, I have been running 2 small country mills in this town the past 20 years, but am now giving up one of them at Michaelmas next owing to the great competition in the trade.

FORM No. 2,098. Margarine Manufacturers.

All we know is that wages in Holland, which is the country from which most of the foreign margarine comes, are much less than what we pay our workers, and the workers in Holland work much longer hours than they do here.

N. KILVEET & SONS, LTD., TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER; Lard Refiners.

No official figures are issued, but we had occasion to enquire into the importation of American refined lard for the 9 weeks ending January 31st, 1903, and found that during that period over 400,000 packages were imported into English ports in that time. This would at the very lowest computation amount to 5,000 tons, all of which could have been refined by us or other British houses.

CROWN CORN, OIL CAKE & CHEMICAL MANURE CO., LTD., HULL; Oil Cake & Chemical Manure Manufacturers.

I we had no foreign competition we could run our mills all the year round, instead of say 8 months; plenty of competition to keep prices from rising much; at present we cannot crush seeds to pay corn cost—

leaving out any question of profit ; if there were more work, wages would rise through supply and demand. Foreigners put on a duty of many pounds per ton on English oil, they crush seed, keep oil for own market and send cakes (by-products for them) to our market and having spoilt our oil market spoil our cake market at home.

FORM No. 5,787. Bacon Curers.

If it were not for the large importation of foreign bacon our trade would expand in the home market and enable us to largely increase the number of our employees. Under present conditions the prospect of doing so is far from encouraging. In the year 1903 we did our largest trade, but the increase is nothing to what it would be if we were not squeezed out of our own market by the foreigner.

H. LEAKE & SON, LTD., KING'S LYNN OIL MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

Our mills could manufacture, without enlargement, 6,000 tons linseed cake in the year. Last year they only manufactured 4,325 tons costing in wages £1,783. They had to be stopped for weeks (whilst foreign manufactured cakes were coming in in quantity) because we could not make at an equal price.

T. SCOTT, HARRY MILLS, ORKNEY ; Miller.

£50 would be a very low estimate of the loss I sustained for year 1903, and the loss sustained for present year (1904) will be much higher. Of course crops were very defective in Orkney last season, causing produce to be higher priced—still food stuffs remained low priced.

C. MARSTON, ROLLER MILLS, EARSHAM, NORFOLK, AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK ; Millers, &c.

I could have done a very much larger trade with London and other large towns which now buy foreign flour. My mills could easily have worked longer hours and I could have employed more labour corresponding to the increased output. On account of this my labour bill would have increased by £200 a year, and my rail charges at least £100 a year more. We suffer from not being able to get boys young so as to properly train them for the trade ; this is very serious to master millers.

C. CHAMBERLAIN, CHILTON MILL, HUNGERFORD, BERKS. ; Miller.

If foreign flour were not imported, I could double my labour bill to my own advantage.

FORM No. 2,841. Rice Starch Manufacturers.

A loss in wages of £5,000.

GLASGOW AND DISTRICT MILLING TRADE FRIENDLY AND PROTECTIVE LEAGUE, 32, MORGAN STREET, GOVANHILL, GLASGOW, W. (T. LAING).

During slackness in the milling trade employees get suspended for 1 or 2 days per week as the same number of men must always be at work when mills are running. 1900 and 1901 were the slackest years for the past 5 years ; 1902 and the greater part of 1903 have been the busiest years for a long time back ; there is a great slackness just now (November, 1905 : slackness of short duration). During 1904-5, up to the present all mills have been fully employed—viz. : 55 hours for mills that run night and day. There are a few men that have day shift only work 56 hours. Every time there is a slackness and the mills on short time a few always leave the trade, mostly young men. The tramways in Glasgow have a good few millers as drivers and conductors. A few have gone to Canada, and 2 or 3 to India ; they are all following their own trade except 2 that are trying farming in Canada.

M. L. BAGG, RADIPOLE MILLS, WEYMOUTH ; Miller.

If manufactured flour was favoured by a duty I could keep 6 or 8 men well employed, where at present 2 more than suffice for the work that is done.

JOURNEYMAN BUTCHERS' FEDERATION OF GREAT BRITAIN, 37, ST. GEORGE'S ROAD, BARNSLEY.

The importation of foreign meat which arrives in England slaughtered has, I estimate, affected the journeyman butchers of England, which has caused the non-employment of slaughtermen and wages generally, this being the result of men only being able to find employment for 2 or 3 days per week and are compelled to seek employment in other trades apart from butchering. We have no members who have emigrated, yet I should estimate, as near as I can, about 40 % of the profession have emigrated to America, Canada, New Zealand, &c., on account of the slaughtering which has to be done for the foreign meat trade.

FORM No. 3,993. Corn Miller and Hay Merchant.

The trade I go in for is not in the slightest way affected by the importation of goods from abroad. Of course, if a tax were put on foreign flours and I found that I could manufacture them cheaper than the foreigner, it is in every way likely that I, in common with many other country millers, would go in for flour milling.

FORM No. 2,849. Millers and Corn Merchants.

We cannot say that 1903 shewed a loss of employment in comparison with recent years, but less foreign importation would have given increased employment.

G. OLDEN, SHERFIELD MILL, ROMSEY, HANTS ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

Not much in mine, but doubtless there is a great loss to this country, both to the producer and the labouring men, mechanics, &c.

FORM No. 5,751. Farmer, Brewer, &c.

Not directly ; we certainly suffer with those who have lost employment. The country suffers also.

C 3,952. Farmer.

We have great difficulty at one farm as to labour, because of the competition of a near city; on the other farm there is not very much difficulty, there is a good supply of labour and the quality is very fair, and compares favourably with what it was at the best times. Some people say the men do rather less, but I cannot say so myself, they do their work well and some of them take an interest in it. On the near-city farm the men do not seem to care; they say they can get work in town at much higher wages. I am very dissatisfied with the labour there both in quantity and quality. As they are educated nowadays they are not content to remain as agricultural labourers.

C 2,518. Farmer.

I have had no difficulties with regard to labour, except that the quality has gone down very considerably. This must be partly due to over-education. The children are kept at school a little longer than is necessary from an agricultural point of view. When the boys leave school now they appear to be an entirely different class from what they were some years ago. They seem to care for nothing whatever; they do not care to learn. We give them every opportunity of an agricultural education, and they care but little about it. I have had my present holding for 10 years, but before I came there I had my previous holding 22 years and I brought several of my men with me, and they are with me now.

(J) RAILWAY AND SHIPPING RATES.

QUESTION 15 (FORM II.):—*Please give any information you have showing the effect on your trade of the differentiation in foreign countries of railway rates and shipping charges on goods exported to the United Kingdom, or other countries.*

Railway and
Shipping Rates

D. COOK, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE; Farmer.

Our produce goes to Dunstable or Luton, which are glutted with foreign produce, and it seems that we have lost our markets and that the foreigners are now using our home markets for dumping the world's surplus produce. Agriculture is destroyed, and we are now dependent on foreign supplies for $\frac{1}{3}$ of our food supply with many thousands of acres of excellent corn-growing land lying derelict, which I consider a national disgrace. Railway rates are cruel, as the charges are much more from London to Dunstable or Luton, than they are from New York, America, to Liverpool. Every facility seems to be offered to the foreigner at the expense of our home industries, which are deadened by the so-called Free Trade.

H. PARKER, NORWICH; Seed Merchant.

The rail rates charged in England are much too high compared with what one pays abroad.

E. BYRNE, RATHVILLY, CARLOW; Farmer.

I could market my corn in Dublin much handier as I live only 3 miles (Irish) from Rathvilly railway station, but rates are prohibitive, both as regards corn, cattle, and everything else. A waggon load of fat beasts would cost me from Rathvilly to Dublin per rail 29s. for 8 beasts. Corn would cost me 1s. 1d. per barrel to 1s. 2d. by the time it would be sold in Dublin market; I can have it at Carlow much cheaper. The distance to Dublin from Rathvilly is about 40 or 42 miles, that is rail miles. Again I must draw particular attention to the rates of rail and canal as being altogether behind times in this country to compete with the foreigner, and this should be taken into account when striking out any scheme.

J. RICHARDS, WOLVERTON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE; Farmer.

Generally walk cattle to market because it is considerably cheaper and can get them to market in time, which the railway does not undertake.

R. TIERNEY, TEMPLEMORE, TIPPERRARY; Farmer.

I sell my cattle in the fair of Templemore which is 3 miles from my home. The railway rates to Dublin or any other of the seaports are prohibitive. A Canadian farmer could land a 3-year old beast in Liverpool at a lesser rate than I could send such an animal to Liverpool from Templemore railway station. Rates must come down.

FORM No. 12,714. Farmer.

Stock walked to market; railway rates prohibitory.

P. STACK, FERMOY, CO. CORK; Farmer.

Rate to Cork about 5s. per ton for potatoes and grain, and from Fermoy to Cork the railway rate is high for cattle and sheep. The last cow I sent to Cork by rail, the railway company charged me 10s. for her, and some time ago I had an occasion to bring 3 waggons of sheep from Cork to Fermoy, and the railway company charged me £3 17s.; it was almost 1s. per sheep.

WM. S. YATES, LEINSTER LODGE, ATHY, KILDARE; Farmer.

I consider the high railway rates are a serious drawback to the Irish farmer.

J. MARK, MYROE, LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

To use the railway would be more economical of time, but freight is prohibitive.

W. GAMBLE, D.C., CLAVE, CASTLEDERG, TYRONE; Farmer.

Railway carriage for farm produce is very high, and unless for distances over 30 miles, it is fully as costly as cartage here in Ireland.

H. YORATH, MAESMAWR, TALYBONT-ON-USEK, BRECONSHIRE ; Farmer.

Re marketing of produce : a few years ago I tried selling cabbage and savoys to Merthyr, about 17 miles away, where there is a ready sale for such goods. I sold the cabbage at 10d. per dozen delivered in Merthyr ; when I paid the carriage I found the railway company charged me at the rate of 5d. per dozen. Of course I had to give up growing green stuff for market owing to the high railway charges.

J. HENDERSON, FENAGH HOUSE, BAGENALSTOWN ; Farmer.

Railway rates for agricultural produce are ruinously high, absorbing large percentage of agriculturists' profits. Reform urgently needed in this direction. Rates for feeding stuffs and manure are also exorbitant.

J. R. GOUGH, COLLEGE FARM, BUCKINGHAM, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

Railway rates are much too high and service bad, cattle having to be in trucks fully 16 hours for the 33 miles.

M. ADDISON, RIBY, NEAR STALLINGBRO', LINCOLN ; Farmer.

The rate is very much out of proportion to those for longer distances, which very unfairly favours foreign corn. Farmers have to complain in addition to free imports of corn, unfair railway rates on home products, and also local rates, highways, for instance.

J. FALCONEB, MICHELDEVER, HANTS ; Farmer.

I consider the rates on hay and straw excessive, and rates on all home-grown corn very heavy. The foreign grain is carried much cheaper.

G. ADAMS, ROYAL PRIZE FARM, WADLEY HOUSE, FARINGDON, BERKS. ; Farmer.

The rate for milk is 1s. 3d. per churn. I truck will take 70 churns daily twice, one morning and one evening, which leaves the railway company £3,619 11s. 8d. for carriage, being one of the best paying things railway companies get, and should be taken at 1s. per churn. Our off-going cows we make mostly into beef, which has been selling very badly owing to such large importations of foreign meat and for which I don't think we have been making more than 5d. per lb., and pork bacon the same, which is very low and a ruinous price to us farmers, and I do think all foreign meat ought to bear a small tax. The railway carriage is very costly on account of beasts having to go by passenger train, there being no goods train to catch the market.

J. B. A. BOSANQUET, LAHARDAN HOUSE, PORTLAW, CO. WATERFORD ; Farmer.

Even for pressed hay rates are prohibitive, and no portable pressing machinery is to be had on hire ; foreign hay and straw are being brought in from France. Excessive railway rates and prohibitive prices for complete manures have a great deal to say to Ireland's backwardness, and are driving land out of cultivation ; we want higher and technical education.

C. A. WEBB, QUARTERTOWN, MALLOW, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

Railway rates are so high for agricultural produce that very little is sent by rail. Personally I send none.

REV. J. C. GARDNER, FLUKE HALL, NEAR GARSTANG, LANCS. ; Farmer.

A small farmer has a poor chance of paying his way under existing circumstances ; high wages, high freights for all produce to the large towns, and the low prices he can command as against the foreigner, who can get his goods over sea and land at a cheaper rate than the British farmer can send them by land only.

S. KIDNER, BICKLEY, MILVERTON, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

Barley is sold sometimes to brewers direct, sometimes to dealers. The railway rates are generally a serious handicap. When it goes to Burton, as it often does, the railway charge for 170 to 180 miles is 16s. 7d. per ton, or from 17s. 6d. to £1 per acre on the crop.

T. WARD, CARRINGTON GRANGE, BOSTON, LINCS. ; Farmer.

The railways have raised the rate for potatoes from this (Spalding) neighbourhood this year. They also charge about twice the rate on coal for the Boston consumer, allowing a half rate (about) on all coal exported from Boston dock.

C. R. CLARK, THE SQUARE, RETFORD, NOTTS. ; Seed Grower and Merchant.

Until the Government takes over the railways of this country, we shall be severely handicapped ; the rates are most unfair.

FORM No. 10,399. Butter Merchants.

Could give you plenty of instances where the railway rates in England kill trade.

A. SATCHWELL, CREGGS, CO. ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

There must be some change in the way railways in these parts are worked, &c. There is no chance given agriculturists. Take a case. Cattle from America cost very little more to certain parts of England than from here, with this difference : these cattle are improving all the way over, and look well when landed, while those from here are bruised, knocked about, and very often look wretched on their arrival.

WM. GALE, KNOSSINGTON ; Grazier.

The railway rates are the greatest difficulty.

1453

J. E. ILIFF, 17A, LEUR STREET, MANCHESTER ; Merchant.

This does not affect me ; so many of the commodities in which I move now seem to be left almost entirely to the production of continental manufacturers. Many industries are much affected by cheap transit, for example, fruit growers in England in the days of plenty. The English grower tells you it does not pay him to expend money to gather the fruit and pay English railway rates to get it to market as the foreign price out-does him. Two years ago since I saw an immense cargo of bilberries (a small fruit, I grant) packed up in neatly-made chip baskets with an effectively got up paper laid on the top of the fruit : " Selected Bilberries, grown in Germany." I was told of a large moor near to, abounding with this fruit, but railway rates prevented profitable gathering, so they rotted.

H. C. VILLIERS-STUART, CAPPOQUIN, WATERFORD ; Farmer.

There is a station at Cappoquin. Railway rates in general very high, but facilities are given for sending small quantities of butter.

J. H. STAPLES, LISAN, COOKSTOWN, TYRONE ; Farmer.

It would benefit all producers and consumers if railways were obliged to carry at " farm produce " rates to " middlemen " as well as to private consumers.

FORM No. 12,857. Farmer.

Railway rates are prohibitive in Ireland, and are a most serious injury to the farming interest. We find the less we have to say to the railways under present conditions the better for ourselves, and are debarred from going further afield to seek a market.

J. & S. G. MURTLAND, LIMAVADY, CO. LONDONDERRY ; Farmers.

The railway rates are very excessive. To give you an instance : In Coleraine, a distance of 9 miles from our place, the merchants are able to give 5s. per ton more for the produce delivered there than we are able to get in Limavady, owing to the steamboat traffic.

C. E. BARRITT, MALDON, ESSEX ; Farmer.

Hay principally sent by water (to London), as it is cheaper carriage.

C 1,486. Fruit Salesmen.

Home railway rates prevent a heavy crop of soft fruit being put on the market ; foreigners have better conditions. It is not generally known that it is solely foreign fruit that is condemned ; to avoid condemnation it is often sent as pulp. Trade in grapes was established with Paris 15 years ago, but when it began to succeed a duty equivalent to about 2s. per lb. was put on, which kept out Belgian grapes also and turned them on to the London market.

FORM No. 3,831. Corn Miller.

Our railway rates are a great disadvantage, they being so heavy ; otherwise we might compete with the foreigner, as their goods are very inferior to our productions. At our little railway stations we are very heavily rated, whilst to some of our large ones, upwards of 20 miles further from Liverpool, goods are delivered for the same rate. If we want to send to the same place we have sometimes to cart 3 or 4 miles from the station and back, and then a heavy railway charge for a few miles.

J. SMITH, BRAINTREE, ESSEX ; Farmer.

A good deal of the produce is sold on rail and costs 9d. to 1s. to get to the mill or malting, often a distance under 15 miles.

FORM No. 4,342. Miller.

I consider that the charges for carriage of goods in this country, as compared with the cost of sending from foreign countries to our ports, is the most adverse feature.

W. MATHEWS, CLOUGHMILLS, BELFAST, ANTRIM ; Farmer.

Railway rates do not directly affect farmers in this neighbourhood, but they do very adversely affect us indirectly, as every producer on the face of the globe has special rates to London, except the home producer. If the State controlled transit, it would do more for agriculture than all the tariff commissions put together.

W. W. WEST, WISBECH, CAMBRIDGESHIRE ; Farmer.

The railways being granted a monopoly of the carriage of my goods, in order to increase the tonnage of foreign produce, charge less for through transit on foreign goods than they do for English goods the same distance.

G. COWAN, JUNR., BRIDGE MILL, GLENLUCE, WIGTOWNSHIRE ; Grain Merchant, Miller and Seedsman.

I consider the heavy rates charged by railway companies unfair because they favour the foreigner, and are very prejudicial to the home trade.

FORM No. 4,757. Millers.

All coals required by the home manufacturer are charged at a premium beyond the same coals shipped for foreign manufacturers and other purposes, even where it is distinctly shown that the railway companies do only the same service.

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J. H. MEREDITH & Co., Worcester; Hop Growers.

I believe it is still the case that hops and clover seeds can be delivered in Worcester from Hamburg or Antwerp at a lower rate than hops and seed can be sent from Worcester to stations on the line by which similar goods travel when shipped from Antwerp or Hamburg for Worcester, the railways giving special rates to the steamship lines.

H. LEAKE & SON, LTD., OIL CAKE MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK; Linseed Merchants.

Our only experience of any differential rates is in this country, where the foreigner receives the benefit of a much lower rate for his coal for export than the home trade does for use. Locally we have a preference given by the rail and dock companies to coal for export over coal for our use, so that the very German mills which are competing against us in cakes can get their coals on the other side at the same price they cost us at Lynn. Such is Free Trade!

C 3,909. Fruit Merchants.

We have always taken the strongest exception to the preference given to foreigners in the matter of railway rates, but abundant proof can be furnished you of this preference by London dealers.

LITTLE & BALLANTYNE, VICTORIA VIADUCT, CARLISLE; Seed Merchants.

Railway rates in this country are a serious drawback to expansion of home trade. The competition for the traffic from the larger ports has resulted in material reductions in rates to the benefit of the foreigner. This question should have careful consideration, as the British merchant must pay full rates on all products despatched from an inland town.

W. R. ENNALS, COCKFIELD, SUFFOLK; Miller and Corn Merchant.

If you can get the railways of this country to reduce the freights on home produce it will make a vast difference to trade, and let them charge double or more freight on imported German manufactured goods, which I understand are being carried much cheaper than our own goods. It costs less to get maize from the American seaboard to England than from London to Ipswich by rail.

J. PATTINSON & SON, WHITEHAVEN; Millers and Corn Merchants.

We do not think we suffer any adverse competition from any difference in the rates of wages or in the hours of labour, but we consider we suffer in the question of freight, as the U.S.A. miller has only to pay freights on the flour which he sends to the English market, whereas we have to pay freight on the wheat, which includes the offal, and as it takes about 400 lbs. wheat to make 280 lbs. flour we pay about $\frac{3}{4}$ tbs more freight on each sack of flour than the U.S.A. miller.

FORM No. 4,914. Corn Merchant.

You can get wheat from New York to London cheaper than from here, which is only 23 miles, and costs by rail 4s. 7d. per ton, over 1s. per qr. of 504 lbs., and the same thing is done by the railways in favour of foreign goods. You will find the rate from Liverpool to London is cheaper than from a point half-way.

WILSON, KERR & Co., 26, BREAD STREET, EDINBURGH; Provision Merchants.

Owing to railway arrangements with boats coming from Denmark, Holland, &c., to Leith, goods can come into Leith and thence per rail to Dundee, Aberdeen, &c., at a mere trifle over the boat rate to Leith, thus giving foreigners a cheaper rate inland than we have.

W. GRAHAM & Co., HEADLEY OIL MILLS, GREENWICH; Oil Cake Manufacturers.

Our trade suffers from:—(1) Preferential rates granted by English railways to foreign goods; (2) low rates of freight charged by the large steamers, which accept anything rather than pay for ballast; (3) heavy rates and taxes in London, foreign goods being practically exempt; (4) cost of insurance against the Employers' Liability Act; (5) the Building Acts relating to London (which will not permit the erection of a corrugated iron building, or allow a yard to be covered with an iron roof, unless surrounded with brick walls); (6) The Factory Acts, which place difficulties in the way of employing young persons.

J. INGLIS & SONS, MIDLOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

The rates of freight from United States to South African ports, as an illustration, are about 50 % under the rates charged by the combination of steamship owners from this country. We also suffer severely owing to the preference given on through bills of lading for imported goods, the inland rates for similar distances much higher on the local or home-made article. The freight on oatmeal from Leith or Glasgow to, say, London or Liverpool is generally much higher than the freight from, say, New York to either of those ports.

FORM No. 10,523. Seed, Grain Merchant, &c.

The freights to U.S.A. are out of all proportion to freights to other parts of the world—for instance, the present freight to New York is 21s. per ton, whilst to and from Buenos Ayres it is only 14s., to and from New Zealand it is only 20s. There is a demand for cheap direct freights from Canadian ports to London, which would tend to lower the very high rates to and from the U.S.A., and lead to more business.

FORM No. 10,233. General Merchant.

It is possible to ship goods from foreign ports to U.K. for the same money as from up-county towns to seaports here.

1461

J. KEITH, 84-86, CADZOW STREET, HAMILTON, N.B.; Merchant.

Cheaper "through rates" can be got from Continent to stations in Ireland than can be got relatively from home ports, and there is thus encouragement to buy direct from foreign manufacturers.

M. UNDERHILL & SONS, 7, HIGH STREET, OXFORD; Merchants.

I can get hams and bacon cheaper from America than from Ireland. This is partly because Irish goods come in small quantities, compared with the American, but the railway companies' "preference" rates against "small" are excessive. It costs me 4s. per cwt. to get a small cask of Irish hams from Limerick to Oxford. The freight for bacon from Copenhagen to Oxford is only 2s.—1s. steamship and 1s. rail. The steamship companies do not charge extra for smalls, so when I get a few casks of butter from Copenhagen I pay 1s. per cwt. for the sea freight and about 2s. for the railway journey. The excessive charges on the part of the railways for smalls undoubtedly encourage the importation of foreign goods in preference to English.

SEGAR & TUNNICLIFFE, 9, BRUNSWICK STREET, LIVERPOOL; Grain Merchants.

We know of no instances under this head applicable to the grain trader, excepting that low through rates are in force for flour from American mills to consumers in any part of the United Kingdom, but details are not available.

GOODWIN & Co., 75, CHEAPSIDE, LIVERPOOL; Merchants.

Cheap through rates from foreign countries has had a beneficial effect upon our business.

JOINT COMMITTEE, MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S, BLANDFORD, AND WINFRITH FARMERS' CLUBS, DORSET.

In our opinion there is a differentiation unfavourable to the home producer in railway rates. To remedy the evil a permanent Board of Railway Commissioners should be invested with powers to adjust and fix all rates for the carriage of produce, with a view to making them fairly proportionate, having regard to the distance, quantity, &c., carried.

C 663.

COMPARATIVE RAILWAY RATES.

	Cotton.	Wool.	Grain.	Oilcake.	Packed Manure.
LONDON TO MAIDSTONE (41 miles) ..	11/5	8/9	3/7	3/1	3/-
Equal distance (64 kilos):					
Germany	4/-	4/-	4/-	2/10	2/10
Belgium	4/10	4/10	3/10	2/10	2/10
Denmark	4/2	4/2	2/9	2/9	2/1
France	5/6	3/8	3/8	2/6	2/6
Hungary	3/10	3/10	3/4	2/10	1/8
Italy	4/4	5/4	3/6	2/9	—
Russia	4/-	4/-	3/-	3/-	1/2
LONDON TO NOTTINGHAM (125 miles)	25/3	27/6	13/3	13/4	10/10
Equal distance (200 kilos):					
Germany	10/4	10/4	10/4	5/7	5/7
Belgium	8/9	8/9	6/3	4/7	4/7
Denmark	7/7½	7/7½	5/6	5/6	4/2
France	8/4	7/11	7/6	5/6	5/6
Hungary	11/-	11/-	9/2	7/10	4/7
Italy	12/-	12/9	8/9	7/7	3/1
Russia	13/3	13/3	9/1	9/1	—
LONDON TO LIVERPOOL (201 miles) ..	25/-	27/6	17/6	17/6	15/9
Equal distance (322 kilos):					
Germany	15/6	15/6	15/6	8/3	8/3
Belgium	10/5	10/5	7/3	5/7	5/7
Denmark	9/4	9/4	7/1½	7/1½	5/6
France	15/7	15/7	12/4	10/6	6/2
Italy	17/3	17/6	12/-	10/9	—
Russia	14/8	19/1	9/2	—	4/8
LONDON TO NEWCASTLE (272 miles) ..	33/3	36/9	19/2	19/2	19/2
Equal distance (414 kilos):					
Germany	19/11	19/11	19/11	10/4	10/4
Italy	24/-	24/-	17/6	14/11	—
Russia	22/6	28/6	14/10	—	7/-
LONDON TO ABERDEEN (523 miles) ..	41/8	51/8	30/-	30/-	30/-
Equal distance (837 kilos):					
Germany	38/8	38/8	38/8	19/6	19/6
Denmark	12/9	12/9	9/10	9/10	7/8

1462

1463

1464

C 1,406.

The actual charges on a carcase of mutton from New Zealand are as follows:—Freight and killing, 1 s.d. per lb.; insurance, 1 d. per lb.; London charges, 1 d. per lb.; total, 1 s.d. per lb. On a carcase of 56 lbs. this amounts to nearly 6s. 9d. A carcase of Argentine mutton from the River Plate costs from 2s. 6d. to 3s. for carriage—this may not include "London charges" and insurance. Railway rates to London for fresh meat are as follows:—

RAILWAY RATES TO LONDON ON FRESH MEAT.

From.	Miles.	Service.	For 3-Ton Lots.		For 1 Ton or Less.	Pence per Ton.	Pence per Mile.
			Rate Co's Risk.	Rate Owner's Risk.			
Aberdeen	452	Goods	75/-	67/6	—	2	1½
Edinburgh	400	"	77/-	70/-	—	2-31	2-10
"	—	Pass.	75/-	—	80/-	2-25	2-4
Bristol	118	Goods	21/-	20/-	33/4	2-13-2-03	3-39
Southampton	79	"	21/-	—	—	—	3-20
Liverpool	201	"	25/-	—	40/-	1-50	2-38
Holland—							
Via Flushing	140	{ Boat and Rail }	53/-	—	—	—	4-54
Via Harwich	171		48/-	—	—	—	3-37

On consignments from Aberdeen to London there is an additional charge of 4/2 per ton for toll and pitching.

FORM No. 12,070. Farmer.

The railway rates on hay and potatoes are much too high, seeing they can be brought from Germany and Holland for less money than we pay in rates to London.

F. H. B. SAMPEY, J.P., B.A., T.C.D., WILLSBORO', BALLINLOUGH, ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

It nearly costs as much to bring a carcase of beef from Roscommon to Manchester as it does to bring one from Chicago to Manchester.

FORM No. 2,758. Millers.

Our trade is subject to adverse competition through cheaper rates of freight and carriage on U.S.A. and Canadian goods, which are carried long distances at a much lower rate in proportion to the charges on home railways, thus enabling our competitors to land their goods here under our cost price. The goods (oatmeal and rolled oats) are manufactured in U.S.A. and Canada from oats grown in these countries at a much less cost than British oats can be produced. This is owing to cheaper land. A cheaper freight can be got from U.S.A. and Canada to Cape Town than to Britain, and they have practically all the South African trade in rolled oats and oatmeal in consequence. In foreign countries the same applies, as our customers have the same complaint to make.

F. LLOYD & Co., NELSON ST., LYNN ; Grain Shippers.

Ocean and other over-sea freights are now no protection to home-grown grain. 200 miles carriage on English lines is more than freight from U.S.A., east or west coast. The low rail charges on foreign railways to seaboard and low (very often combined and through rate) over-sea freight to English East-coast ports, handicap our home grain trade, with our heavy English rail rates and coasting steamer freights; for instance, Leith and Glasgow can buy Dutch peas, rape seed, &c., &c., at less money than we can compete with them. Again—freight, Hamburg to Lynn, 6s. per ton; Lynn to Leith, 10s. 10d. per ton.

W. ORAM & SONS, CARLISLE ; Ham and Bacon Curers.

America can get her produce on to the English markets at about one quarter the price that we can. New York to Liverpool, 7s. 6d. per ton; Carlisle to Liverpool, 15s. per ton; Carlisle to London, 30s. per ton. It would appear strange that the cost from New York to Liverpool runs from 5s. to 10s., and for the 100 miles on this side costs twice this amount.

C. MARSTON, ROLLER MILLS, EARSHAM, NORFOLK, AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK ; Millers, &c.

Since July last year American flour has practically closed London markets against the country mills; the cheap transit from America is partly the cause of this. The carriage per ton from Bungay to London is 7s. 2d.; the carriage from America to London is not more than about half.

FORM No. 10,311. Dairymen.

We can manufacture goods in Canada and ship to South African ports at lower freight charges than those from English ports to same places. Distinction owing to the "iniquitous South African shipping ring," consequently our U.K. manufactures will increase.

BUSCK & Co., 66, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C. ; Corn Merchants.

The preferential railway rates in France on goods for export have been to our benefit, as they facilitate business.

FORM No. 10,299. Market Gardener.

The differentiation of rates and charges has rather favoured our import trade.

FORM No. 10,407. Grain Merchants.

Foreign bounty-supported ships do a great portion of the grain-carrying trade from the Pacific coasts of America and Australia.

W. JOHNSTONE, CORN EXCHANGE, 81, HOPE STREET, GLASGOW; Grain Merchant.

I cannot give details, but the American railways give preference on grain and especially flour for export; the conditions of these preferences are, however, difficult to trace, the bargains being often of a secret nature.

FORM No. 10,534. Seed Merchant.

Some years ago a much larger proportion was brought to London and transhipped there; now a larger proportion to Antwerp and Hamburg, owing to freights from the Colonies to these ports, and thence to consuming ports, being more advantageous than via London.

HALES, DANCY & Co., LTD., BRIGHTON; Fruit Merchants, &c.

The much smaller charges in proportion in France by the railways make it easier to get goods, say from Bordeaux, Nantes, and other places, than from Wisbech, say the Midlands. For instance, if a low rate is wanted, it will be fixed by the Government through the Minister of Railways (the railways being subsidised by the Government), and it is not in the power of the rail authorities there to make arbitrary rates as they do in this country. The French railways are always willing to make special cheap rates for big quantities of goods.

1470

W. RAINEY & SON, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE; Merchants and Importers.

We can bring cakes from Russia to Boston for 8s. per ton. A truck-load of cakes from Boston to Lincoln, 30 miles, costs nearly 6s. per ton. This is a serious grievance.

SIMMONDS, HUNT & Co., 24, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Millers.

In no country are rail rates so high as here, and in no port known to us are dock facilities less. The port of Antwerp is a notable example. In no country are canal facilities so shamefully ignored and put into the back-ground, instead of being federated and fostered. The enormous growth of Antwerp and Rotterdam as import and transit cities for the millions of Belgium, Holland, and Rhenish and Central Germany, is due in a very great measure to the magnificent system of canals running thence through those countries and carrying immense loads, 1,000-2,000 tons in single bottoms into the very heart of Germany, and enabling return goods to be exported at rates we cannot possibly touch. In no other way could railways in this country be kept in check effectively; but our whole canal system is scandalously neglected and quite behind the age.

1471

R. SILBERRAD & SON, 25, SAVAGE GARDENS, CRUTCHED FRIARS, LONDON, E.C.; Nurserymen and Seedsmen.

We find that goods from Berlin to London cost little more than half as much as the same goods sent *vice-versa*. This has been very noticeable when returning imported goods to the sender.

Exactly the same remark applies to goods imported from, and exported to, Belgium, and the difference between the two rates is, perhaps, even more marked still in the case of Holland.

W. MACLAY, CORN EXCHANGE BUILDINGS, GLASGOW; Grain Merchant.

The railways (in foreign countries) and shipping companies carry goods exported to this country at very moderate rates, so I cannot say I have suffered at all. The U.S. export of maize to the Clyde fell away altogether last season, so I just turned to the Black Sea and the Argentine, as it mattered little to me where the grain came from. I handle steam cargoes when there is inducement, and have shipped direct at times to London, Liverpool, Bristol, Dublin, Belfast, and Newcastle from foreign countries.

FORM No. 10,534. Seed Merchants.

Our business has been very much affected by lines of subsidised steamers having of late years traded direct between our Colonies and continental ports, and by foreigners establishing themselves in many of our Colonies. To a large extent we have, however, counteracted this by ourselves doing business via Antwerp and Hamburg.

1472

FORM No. 10,554; Foreign Merchants.

We find the English dock rates for receiving and shipping goods much higher than the German.

(K) INDUSTRIAL COMBINATION.

QUESTION 13 (FORM II):—*Has the growth of combinations in the United States, Germany, and other foreign countries affected your business either at home or abroad, and, if so, in what manner?*

SIMMONDS, HUNT & Co., 24, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Millers.

Undoubtedly—business has become entirely altered, old landmarks swept away, supply and demand no longer chief factors, since no one can foretell or foresee some sudden disturbance by speculative action, *e.g.*, the present cotton agitation which doubtless has a natural basis under ordinary conditions, but has been manipulated into arbitrary ones. It is difficult to see how the "option" dealing can be checked or controlled, and to some extent trade has become used to it, but it conduces to speculative disturbance which would be almost impossible otherwise. At this moment U.S.A. is rapidly putting up value of wheat—this arising out of the Russo-Japanese war is legitimate, but rendered more acute by option dealing and by powerful trade combinations.

Industrial
Combination

FORM No. 10,056. Egg and Butter Merchants.

Yes, in the secondary articles in which we deal. Cheese and lard. The prices of these articles are ruled from America by syndicates of the cheese markets for cheese, and the mammoth pork packing firms of Chicago with regard to lard. The question of price is not ruled in the slightest by supply and demand, but by the whim of these magnates who cable their commands to London.

FORM No. 10,097. Grain Merchants.

By buying up mills and controlling the output enhanced the value so as to considerably reduce the consumption of oatmeal.

J. LUCAS & Co., 18, WITHEY GROVE, MANCHESTER; Provision Merchants.

Yes, as regards U.S.A. the food supply is largely in the hands of large combinations who control the exports, manipulate the markets, and use their monopoly entirely for their own ends. It is no loss to us, as we get better value from Canada and Denmark.

T. RICHARDSON, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE; Corn Merchant, &c.

The chief injury done to the grain trade—especially wheat and maize—is by the system of option trading which has assumed very serious dimensions in America and is being followed in this country. There are large option markets both in Liverpool and London, but these generally follow the lead of U.S.A. It is nothing uncommon for the American wheat and corn markets to be “rigged” by two or three prominent wealthy firms or corporations, corners created and irreparable injury done to legitimate trade. America is groaning under this vile system and will lose its pre-eminence as a grain market just as the Colonies and such countries as Argentina expand. I consider option dealing ought to be prohibited by law in this country.

WAIT & JAMES, 32, WELSH BACK, BRISTOL; Corn Merchants.

Combination to corner wheat in America often leads to a low price here, as a certain quantity is removed from America to be sold at best here.

M. OUBRIDGE & SON, 5-7, TOWN HALL BUILDINGS, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE; Merchants.

The combinations in the U.S.A. are very detrimental to business. They give control to large speculators who frequently advance the price of produce to a fictitious value, rendering necessary fluctuating selling prices in this country.

G. RODDICK & SONS, 16, WATER STREET, LIVERPOOL; Brokers.

Yes, and has reduced our business quite 50 % during the last 10 years.

THE COLONIAL CONSIGNMENT & DISTRIBUTING CO., LTD., 15, DOWGATE HILL, LONDON, E.C.; Frozen Meat Dealers.

It is hardly too much to say that the prices of meat on the London market are practically controlled by the supplies of “chilled” beef from the U.S.A., although it is doubtful to what extent combination prevails amongst the exporters from that country. It is necessary to dispose of “chilled” beef within a short time of its arrival in this country, and therefore the variations in this supply have an immediate effect on the prices of almost all descriptions of meat.

PEARMAN & CORDER, LTD., SUNDERLAND; General Merchants.

Yes, meat combines in Chicago have resulted in very much higher prices on the Liverpool market, and enabled America to control Liverpool absolutely.

SEGAE & TUNNICLIFFE, 9, BRUNSWICK ST., LIVERPOOL; Grain Merchants.

U.S.A. millers were for some years in the habit of undercutting British millers in our home market. They accomplished this by means of syndicates to keep up their prices in the U.S.A. At that time our business suffered a good deal by the excessive importation of flour; the increase of population in the U.S.A. and consequent extension of demand there, together with the widening of our sources of wheat supply, have diminished the relative quantity of flour which comes to British markets, and home millers can now, in our opinion, well afford to compete with any foreign manufactured flour. It is still the case that U.S.A. millers supply British markets at lower (relative) prices than they obtain for similar goods in their own country, but they now do so only for a period after harvest there, as a rule a short one.

PETERSON & Co., 29, WATERLOO STREET, GLASGOW; Merchants.

The effect of the Beef Trust or Meat Combine in U.S.A., has been to largely curtail our importing business in hog products especially, and to render business insecure and at times almost impossible. The methods adopted are to sell as much of their production in their own country as they can, and then dump the remainder on the British markets, to be sold at whatever prices they may fetch. The same principle has been at work for many years in the U.S.A. flour trade in which we used formerly to do a large trade, but are now entirely out of it, solely on account of the unfair competition of consigned parcels dumped upon the British markets.

E. BLAKEMORE & SONS, LTD., 7-10, SALOP ST., WOLVERHAMPTON; Merchants.

The operations of the “Swift Syndicate” in America rushed the price of American bacon up from 38s. and 40s. per cwt. to 56s. and 58s. per cwt.; this almost immediately had the effect of curtailing our sales of American goods by about 20 %.

1477

GALLON & SONS, GREAT WILSON STREET, LEEDS ; Merchants.

We think the combination of the American packers have increased the price of American bacon and lard.

F. LLOYD & Co., NELSON ST., LYNN ; Grain Shippers.

None, save the gambling in grain options which is not good for English grain trade.

M. UNDERHILL & SONS, 7, HIGH STREET, OXFORD ; Merchants.

If by "combinations" you mean trusts, syndicates and rings, cheese and lard are more or less in the hands of speculators. This means forcing up the prices to us outside dealers, to some extent. This refers to American (including Canadian) products, and such corners are effectual, because the area of production is comparatively limited. Such things as butter, which comes from a number of competing countries, are seldom or never cornered, because the sources of supply are so numerous and the quantity produced so great.

W. JOHNSTONE, CORN EXCHANGE, 81, HOPE STREET, GLASGOW ; Grain Merchant.

The "corners" which have been engineered from time to time in America, have the effect of disorganising business. It is an instructive commentary on the hollowness of the cry about the "dear loaf," which would result from a 2s. per qr. tax on imported foreign grain, that by his single efforts Joseph Leiter raised the price of wheat to about 55s. per qr., nearly double the average normal price of recent years, without any complaint from our working classes. Our experience of such "corners" is a strong reason for our becoming independent of America as our main source of supply.

1478

FORM No. 10,523. Seed, Grain Merchants, &c.

Several "rings" have been formed in America and have from time to time cornered certain articles of Canadian and American growth, which this firm has met by inducing landowners and agriculturists in other parts of the world to take in hand and send to this country. When the price of an article is unduly inflated we leave it alone.

FORM No. 10,326. Seed Merchants.

Roman hyacinth bulb syndicates have been formed in south of France to raise prices, but do not affect this country, as they are the chief producers, although they export the blooms and sell far below our cost.

FORM No. 10,099. Provision Merchants.

So far the combination in the U.S.A. has slightly improved our business by lessening competition, apparently ; but it has been in operation too short a time to be certain as to how it may ultimately work.

FORM No. 10,550. Grain Merchants.

The milling combinations in the United States tend to slightly improve our business as importers.

1479

R. S. SIMPSON, PRESTON ; Butter Merchant.

Yes, most seriously by stopping trade.

T. BOYD & Co., 28, KING STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Merchants.

Of course it has.

CLEPHAN & WIENCKE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE ; Merchants.

We don't know that the growth of combinations abroad has affected our business materially ; they have certainly the tendency to make business more difficult, owing to artificial influences on prices in interference with the ordinary working of supply and demand.

COOPER, TABER & Co., LTD., 90 & 92, SOUTHWARK STREET, LONDON, S.E. ; Seedsmen.

Think not at present, but there is some talk about it doing so in the U.S.A.

1480

W. MACLAY, CORN EXCHANGE BUILDINGS, GLASGOW ; Grain Merchant.

I am quite unaffected by them, I am happy to say. The margin of profit in the corn trade is too small for risks involved, but we have some advantages. We have nothing to do with tariffs ; even when the Government of this country imposed a registration duty on corn, &c., it did not affect me ; I simply added the duty to the c.i.f. price and went ahead. As the registration duty was the same on all grades of flour, I blame the duty for putting a stop to my import of a very cheap flour from the U.S.A., which I sold in this country for cattle feeding.

S. MCLEOD, RUSSELL & Co., 10-11, LIME STREET, LONDON, E.C. ; Merchants.

No, except, perhaps, in the case of wheat, the increased price of which, due to American combine, has stimulated shipments from India.

W. RAINEY & SON, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE ; Merchants and Importers.

No ; a combination was formed 4 years ago in Hull to take over the principal cake mills in this country. About $\frac{1}{2}$ the crushing power in the country entered, but it is held in check by the independent mills, and also by the free importations of foreign cakes.

QUESTIONS 8, 9, 11 (FORM 8):—*What minimum duties, if any, on the articles imported, similar to those you manufacture, do you suggest as sufficient to safeguard the interests of your trade? If such duties were imposed what, in your opinion, would be the effect (a) upon prices in the Home market, (b) in securing greater continuity and security in the Home Trade, (c) in reducing cost of production, (d) in increasing employment, and (e) in increasing wages? Do you think that, in the interests of your trade, special measures are required to prevent the importation of foreign manufactures below cost price in the country of origin; and, if so, of what character should such measures be?*

General

Many millers and a few brewers make a simple general declaration in favour of duties on foreign imports. Other replies are as follows:—

G. COWAN, JUN., BRIDGE MILL, GLENLUOE, WIGTOWNSHIRE; Grain Merchant, Miller and Seedman.

A sufficient tax should be imposed to prevent dumping and to ensure fair play to the home producer.

(a) Prices would rise. (b) Certainly. (c) Not certain. (d) Undoubtedly. (e) Undoubtedly. I don't grudge competition from our Colonies, they are our own kith and kin, but why we should favour the foreigner, who is only waiting the opportunity to cut our throats, passes my understanding.

1482

FORM No. 5,751. Farmer, Brewer, &c.

I favour a tariff such as Mr. Chamberlain suggests, or such as would stimulate production in this country, the Colonies, and British possessions. Beside the revenue derived, the prices of the home market would be firmer, the home trade have better security, cost of production would be reduced with increased trade, employment and wages would rise with increased production. Government should be given special facilities to deal with such cases as they arise. When one trade is affected injuriously in this way, it affects another and all in turn similarly. It is not the detail or letter merely of Tariff Reform, but the principle or policy which inspires it that most concerns me. Trade wants a stronger foundation and safeguard against foreign competition. We must also take up with the Colonies, for if we oblige them to take up with foreign powers when they seek to come into closer commercial relations with us, we cannot have an Empire. There is no economy without maintaining our national and imperial status.

FORM No. 4,696. Miller.

A fairly substantial duty on foreign goods; preferential rate to own Colonies. Inter-trading mutual benefits to accrue. The home markets would, I feel sure, benefit in each particular. I should suggest a duty on wheat flour and foreign barley meal of 20s. per ton.

1483

S. BULLOCK, AYLISHAM, NORFOLK; Corn Merchant and Flour Miller.

The prices of home productions are ruled by foreign supplies and values. A duty on foreign manufactures would give increased employment, and possibly better wages. I would suggest a duty on flour of 6d. per ton; and on wheat, barley and oats of 3d. per ton. It is often said that the consumer pays the import duty. It is certain that the exporter pays in the first instance, and we have the money in hand to set against national expenditure and lessen taxation.

WELCH & SON, DOCK MILL, SOUTHSEA; Flour Millers.

Given our raw material (wheat) cheap, we can more than compete with other countries in the quality of our productions. If it can be proved conclusively that any foreign country is sending a manufactured article below cost price, the Government should see that that particular industry here received a bounty out of the national purse to compensate for loss during the time of unfair importation.

A. J. DIXON, BEAUMONT HALL, REDBOURNE, ST. ALBANS; Farmer.

I am not affected by foreign competition only as it applies to farm produce, and no suggestion has been made that is likely to help us in that respect. I am a strong supporter of fiscal reform as I think it will be a national benefit.

1484

F. J. NATHAN & Co., 10-11, MINCEING LANE, LONDON, E.C.; Merchants.

At "all even" we can compete. The smallest preference would mean an immense impetus to the trade of the country, but it is the Navigation Laws that want altering first. Make the plying between British and Colonial ports a "Coasting trade"—restrict this coasting trade to British bottoms and under British regulations and you will go far towards the realisation of your ideals.

Agriculture Generally

W. STEWART, DUNTOCHER, DUMBARTONSHIRE; Farmer.

I ask supervision over imports equal to that over our home produce.

C 106. Estate Agent.

I am in favour of a tariff duty being put on everything from countries that charge us duty. Beat all foreign countries with their own weapon, charge them the same percentage duty as they charge us for our goods. The Agricultural Returns you have at hand, but I must remind you of the marvellous shrinkage of wheat. Acreage in 1871 to 1875 was 3,737,140, and in 1896 to 1900 it was down to 1,957,575. Great Britain only a shrinkage of 1,779,565 acres less in Great Britain, and at an average of 7 coombs per acre. This shrinkage would be 12,456,955 quarters. This, at 40s. per quarter, would have put the agriculture of England in quite a different position. Not only the agriculturist, but the spending power in this country would have been so much more. This would have gone to trade, which is fast following our agricultural

1485

industry. I am living 3 miles from the railway station at Harleston, and lived in this farm 17 years. At that date there were over 100 trade workmen then employed between my house and Harleston earning from 20s. to 25s. per week, but to-day they are all gone, and the places pulled down and the spending power gone with them, and on my own farm I am employing 20 less men than I should if corn growing would pay. I won 1st prize in farm competition, offered by the Royal Agricultural Society of England in 1886, held at Norwich, Norfolk. I then held the opinion that the more money we spent on our land the better we were off, but, to-day, my opinion is quite changed—the less we spend the better we are off, as I find land laid to grass without labour pays best for my interest, but not good to trade of any kind. Steam power has much to do with our position to-day, and our Agricultural Returns will prove that, to-day, we have thousands of acres of land lying dormant, cottages empty and grown up in their surroundings like a wilderness, and many sad sights to be seen in our rural country villages. Seeing and hearing so much about agricultural depression and being a practical working farmer myself, I think it is quite time the Government looked the problem in the face and tried to do something for the benefit of agricultural interests generally. Government ought to look more to our home industries. Free trade in England seems to me to be one-sided trade. What is England to-day compared with what was before steam power was invented, as far as trade and production are concerned? We are quite as near to America, Australia, and nearly all other foreign countries as some parts of England were to London and Liverpool, before steam power was in use. Unless something is done at once, directly or indirectly, to improve agriculture, the land will be forced out of cultivation. Most of the arable land will have to be laid down to grass except where near a town or railway station. That means that most of the agricultural labourers will be thrown out of employment. I am not much of a protectionist, but we ought to protect the industries of our own country. Let all the world send us what wheat they please in the raw state, but would it not be a great benefit to us if it was manufactured here? That alone would make a large money difference to our country if a duty of what the wheat cost to manufacture were put upon all imported flour, which would not cost a farthing more to the consumer. The milling industry would be quite another thing from what it is to-day. If we keep the manufacturing industries in England in full swing we should have a good demand for our home-produced meat and barley. That would help us to meet the foreigner in our markets.

1486

E. J. BUTT & CO., BARNSTAPLE, DEVON; Dealers in Seeds, Fertilizers, and Grain.

We are engaged in the trade dealing with seeds, fertilizers and grain, but as it is almost exclusively confined to the United Kingdom and Ireland, our business report will not help you, but as our business is nearly allied to agriculture, we not only approve, but attach the greatest importance to Mr. Chamberlain's tariff proposals, for the following reasons:—(a) That the very best should be made of all the agricultural land in this kingdom, especially having in view our food supply in time of war, whereas now about half a million acres are out of cultivation or lacking proper cultivation through foreign competition. (b) That the agricultural land in this country has to bear a large and ever increasing administrative financial burden which imported grain does not share. (c) That any alteration on the lines indicated by Mr. Chamberlain would have the effect of enabling farmers to pay better wages to their labourers and again restoring the balance of population to the land.

1487

J. BEETHERTON & CO., LTD., CHAMPION MILLS, LIVERPOOL; Corn Merchants, Feeding Experts, Farmers.

Everything ought to be fixed at a price which would allow the farmer to grow at a living wage, and not allow anything to enter this country at a price which would prevent the farmer living by growing it—other workers want to live by their work. Then we should produce double in this country, as capital and industry would return to the land, and there would be a real addition to the wealth of the country by every year's crop. Effects: (a) More steady prices. (b) We should know when to expect foreign stuff if prices were arranged for a minimum. (c) The cost of production of home produce would be less in proportion. (d) Every man and woman now idle could be employed in Great Britain and produce a lot of stuff, which could be a great safeguard in time of war and famine abroad, and improve the health and strength of the inhabitants of these islands. (e) Wages would be better. Board of Trade ought to fix a minimum price on articles to maintain the trade and occupation of this country, and if foreigners wish to dump below it, put on the tariff to prevent it being done, and taking the money from this country. We have land, men, and money that could be usefully employed under a correct system, but the opportunity will not last for ever, and if other countries prepare for protection and extension, we shall have to do the same or sink while they swim. I think a proper record ought to be kept of what is being produced here, and what is required for the inhabitants of these islands, and how best to use the non-productive population. Material, land, or capital, industry and wealth would accumulate, and laziness and evil would decrease, then we should get stronger as a nation. The duty ought to be on a sliding scale and be adjusted as required.

1488

J. BROWN, NEWSTEAD MILL, MELBOSE, N.B.; Corn Miller and Corn and Hay Merchant.

(a) It would have the effect of raising the price of bread, but this increase would be a mere bagatelle, and the people as a whole would not feel it, whereas it would give an enormous impetus to the trade of the country. (b) It would also give an impetus to the home growing of wheat (as millers like a portion of home wheat through the foreign), and owing to the large amount of milling which would be done in our own country, a large amount of home-grown wheat would be needed. There would also be a large supply of offals created, which would come in as a great boon to the stock-feeding farmer and dairyman. (c) Cost of production would be lessened, as cost of production decreases in the same ratio as the business of a concern increases. (d) Would largely increase employment; (e) and also wages. All grains in the raw state should be admitted duty free, but all articles manufactured from same should certainly be taxed on admission into this country from a foreign country. Put on a tax that will more than cover these bounty-fed articles. I hope to see sugar-beet grown in England and profitably manufactured into sugar. We can grow a root richer in sugar than the foreign, and with the fair field now given and no favours, we will lick the foreigner.

Agriculture Generally
—continued.

Oatmeal, 2s. 6d. per bag of 280 lbs. or 20s. per ton; flour, 2s. 6d. per bag of 280 lbs. or 20s. per ton; oats, 1s. per qr. of 336 lbs.; barley, 1s. per qr. of 448 lbs.; wheat 1s. per qr. of 504 lbs.; beans, 1s. per qr. of 504 lbs.; Indian corn, 1s. per qr. of 504 lbs.; peas, 1s. per qr. of 504 lbs. If 2s. 6d. was put on the bags of flour, practically all would be manufactured in the U.K., which would make bran very plentiful and cheaper, which would be a great boon to farmers and horse owners; 2s. 6d. duty on oatmeal would completely stop foreign from coming here, and people would get what they are paying for (home oatmeal). Millers would require double the hands they require at present. The price of flour to the consumer would not be raised, as wheat would be imported instead of flour. The price of oatmeal would not be raised as oatmeal would all be made from home oats. All oats, oatmeal and barley from abroad should be labelled and sold as foreign, and a penalty imposed on any merchant for infringement.

M. L. BAGG, RADIPOLE MILLS, WEYMOUTH; Miller.

Flour, 1s. per 112 lbs.; wheat, 6d. per 112 lbs.; barley, 3d. per 112 lbs.; oats, 3d. per 112 lbs.; maize, 3d. per 112 lbs. I believe that the low-class foreign flours would not be used so much, and English wheat flours would be able to compete much better than at present. You would then have much greater continuity and security in your home trade, and that would mean increased employment and better wages. If a duty is put on corn of 2s. per qr., nothing less than 10% should be put on flour. I most certainly think that special measures are required to prevent foreign manufactured goods being sold for less than they can be produced in country of origin, and the remedy is a tariff against them so as to bring the foreign manufacturer's cost up to the cost of production here. I consider the "Tithe" on land is one of the greatest curses we have attaching to it, averaging as it does now this year from 4s. to 5s. per acre throughout the country, and in order to get rid of this great weight attaching to the land, every tithe payer should have the option of purchasing the tithe rent charge on all land by giving 10 years' purchase for it.

JOINT COMMITTEE, MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S, BLANDFORD, AND WINFRITH FARMERS' CLUBS, DORSET.

The proposed duty on wheat would not materially increase the growth in this country. A duty on flour of 2s. per cwt. could reinstate the milling industry and enable the farmer to get feeding stuffs from the offals at a reduced cost while not increasing the price of bread. All barley for feeding purposes, should be admitted free, but an import duty of 6s. per qr. should be put on all barley and other grain, both foreign and Colonial used for malting and distilling purposes with a corresponding reduction in the Excise duty on the articles produced from such barley and other grains. Maize and oats should be admitted free, as being a raw material, except when used for malting or distilling. A preference in favour of the Colonies of one half of these duties would not be materially detrimental to the milling or farming industries, at least within a period of 10 years, if the Colonies grant a corresponding preference by admitting British agricultural produce free. In view of the recent attempt at combination by home manufacturers, foreign competition to some extent is necessary, and unless the proposed duties be imposed on agricultural produce, any duty on farm machinery would unfairly prejudice the farming interests. In the opinion of this committee the imposition of 5% *ad valorem* duty on meat, including bacon, both dead and alive, and dairy produce, both foreign and Colonial, would be an advantage to the producer in this country. The whole of the pork required for consumption could be produced in the country, and the manure produced by the increased feeding of pigs would be of advantage. Although the poor man is the consumer of bacon he is also the producer, and the encouragement of such production would help to keep labour on the land. It is immaterial to the farming interests whether an import duty is imposed on hay or not. An import duty on all roots to be used for purposes of distilling would be beneficial to the farming interests. The duty should be equivalent in effect to a rate of 6s. a qr. on barley to be used for a similar purpose. An import duty on hops is immaterial, but an import duty of 10% *ad valorem* should be imposed on poultry and eggs; manure and all feeding stuffs should be admitted free.

J. HARRISON, ELDFORD MILLS, TAMWORTH; Miller.

Flour, 2s. per sack; wheat, 2s. per qr.; barley, malting, 3s. per qr.; barley grinding, 1s. per qr.; maize, 1s. per qr. The above to be doubled in 2 years when more land will be brought again into cultivation. Markets often rise 2s. per qr. and it is thought nothing of. It would be something similar to an ordinary fluctuation. If markets were on the rise, it would be perceptible; if on the decline we should perceive no difference. If it appeared evident after a General Election that a duty would be imposed, there would be such a dumping of grain that prices would probably be lower for a time: after that we should grow more corn, employ more labour, be more secure and independent of foreign countries. We should reduce the cost of production as trade would be done more locally, and as we should not require so much from abroad we should save carriage from the ports to the Midland counties. Milling would revive, so would agriculture.

F. NEAME, THE OFFICES, MACKNADE, FAVERSHAM; Hop Grower and Farmer.

Hops, a duty corresponding to that which is charged against us in the respective competing countries; fruit, butter, cheese, milk, potatoes 5% to 10%; wheat, barley, 2s. per qr. It would enable the prices in the home market to be regulated to a greater extent by the actual cost of production here, and to some extent obviate the flooding of our markets with foreign surpluses at less than cost price. I scarcely see how it would reduce the cost of production except by enabling us to produce at home some of that which now comes as foreign surplus; it would certainly tend to increase employment and thus help to strengthen the labour market. It sometimes happens that we have a short crop of hops here when a higher price is necessary to recoup the grower for his outlay. In the same year or in previous years a large surplus may have been grown abroad, the surplus is sent here without contributing to our rates or taxes, and having to be realised, is not infrequently offered at considerably below the cost of production in the country of origin, and the price of the home crop is thus disastrously regulated by the value of the foreign surplus and not by the cost of production. And since in the case of a surplus crop being grown here, under the favour of Providence, we can get no outlet for it by reason of the prohibitive foreign tariffs, we

stand twice hit, *i.e.*, by our own surplus in an abundant year, and by the foreigner at all times. The special measure required is a tax upon his imports of the same description, equivalent to, or a little in excess of, that which he pays us the compliment of placing on our productions.

C 2,134. Farmer.

I am farming about 700 acres of mixed land, and I have been in the meat trade over 20 years, and I have found foreign competition very much against the English producer. As regards putting a small duty on all corn and meat, the tax I am about to mention will not raise the price of either, that is to say, 6d. per cwt. on all corn unmanufactured, and 1s. per cwt. on all manufactured corn and offal. All fat cattle 7s. 6d. per head, and on all live sheep 1s. per head; and on all foreign meats, 1s. per cwt. Also each purveyor of foreign meat should pay a small duty and be registered, and should be compelled to have a Government sign over the shop, showing the public that foreign meat was sold there, and all wool and hides and skins should be dealt with accordingly.

C 3,891. Farmer.

I have very strong opinions that there is a way and only one way to restore prosperity to agriculture in Great Britain. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Chamberlain's opinion on the tariff question, and if he manages to keep our general trade in a prosperous condition and keep the growing population of this country in work and at home, I think there is no fear for agriculture.

C 3,897. Farmer.

Tariff reform is the only thing that will, in my opinion, enable the Irish farmer, and for the matter of that, any bona-fide farmer in the United Kingdom to keep his head above water in these times, and farming as I do a mixed farm of over 1000 acres. I have had a good deal of dear-bought experience, as I go in for nearly every kind of stock and tillage farming.

C 3,922. Farmer.

I read most of Mr. Chamberlain's speeches, and at the time felt if protection or fair trade could be carried, it would be the salvation of Ireland—both to the farmer and labourer as one hangs on the other; and now that England will be our principal landlord, we must be protected or we become "prairie value," and then where will the rent come from. I have only just returned from France where I was staying for my health broken down by farming against the adverse circumstances of what is called free trade—it is the ruin of Ireland, whatever it may be to England—it has reduced our population from 8 million to 4 million; our sons and daughters have to go to America where industries are protected.

C 3,882. Farmer.

I remember when we had double what we have now for keeping cattle per year. For instance, my father, 30 or 40 years ago, got £7 and £8 each profit for keeping 2-year-old bullocks, whereas now I can't count on more than £3 or £4, and I treat them better than he did. I think it would be an immense boon to Ireland if we had protection.

C 3,341. Farmer.

Ulster farmers, to a man, are in favour of protection in some form. If it is not got in a few years this part of the country will be laid down to grass, and more than the half of the population leave. A great many have left this last two years: it makes one sad driving through the country to see empty, tumbling down homesteads.

C 850. Farmer.

While urging upon agriculturists to support Mr. Chamberlain in his endeavour to reform our Fiscal Policy for the well-being of the whole Empire, yet, in order that it may be of any real benefit to agriculture, we would impress upon him the importance of placing feeding stuffs and manures on the free list as a set-off against the low duty on wheat which his scheme proposes; also the agriculturist should receive equally favourable treatment with the manufacturer.

J. STEER, UFFCULME MILLS, UFFCULME, DEVON; Corn, Seed, Flour and Manure Merchant.

My trade consists principally in the manufacture of feeding stuffs, retailing same to farmers and dairymen in the district. Being in the centre of a large dairy district, there is a large consumption of barley meal, maize meal and maize, nearly all coming from the Bristol ports, consequently any restriction on the importation of foreign barley or maize would be prejudicial to our trade, increasing the cost of producing bacon, pork, poultry, eggs, &c., and thus put a premium on similar products imported to this country from foreign lands; the more raw material we can attract to our shores the better for the nation at large. That manufactured goods of any kind sent to this country from foreign countries outside the British Empire should be made to contribute to our revenue, in preference to taxing the raw material, is the conscientious belief of the writer.

C 461.

No measures will be effective which do not provide for the revival of rotation cropping on land which has been sown, or grown down to permanent pasture, for which purpose it is of little value. The reason why rotation cropping on it was discontinued was because the landowners and farmers could not afford to pay sufficient labour to cultivate it, when wheat fell to such an unnatural price, and the repeal of the Malt Tax enabled the brewers to use foreign substitutes for barley. Even on the land now under cultivation it is impossible to employ sufficient labour to farm it properly, and that tells heavily against the yield. If it is to be kept in cultivation we

1497 Remedial Measures
Agriculture Generally
 —continued.

must have better prices for corn. A protective duty on wheat up to 37s. 6d. per qr., an equivalent of about 2s. per owt. at present prices, would be necessary; and then there are the grazing and dairying industries sometimes very depressed. These would naturally require some consideration.

FORM No. 5,978. Flour Miller.

I, as an inland miller, find myself hampered by the ever decreasing supply of English wheat, many farms growing only about 10 % of the wheat they grew 15 years ago. In consequence of the short supply of wheat I find the competition of the soft French flour. I also farm some land, and, as a farmer, I fear a duty on foreign wheat would not do me any good, while under the tariff I should pay more for my implements. As a farmer, I do not see how to compete in corn-growing unless a bounty is granted either per acre or per bushel.

Wheat, Barley, Cats R. JACKSON, CASTLE MILLS, HALE, ALTRINCHAM ; Corn Miller.

Foreign imports of hay ought to have a duty put upon them, as they compete with our home-grown hay, which keeps the prices of ours very low. All imports of Indian corn and foreign barley ought as usual to come duty free, for they are a very useful feed for this country, there being a large consumption of both. A small duty on wheat we should scarcely feel, and it would be the means of helping our agricultural class a little. As regards all ready-manufactured imports they should have a duty put upon them as they compete against our home trade.

FORM No. 3,262. Millers.

It would be beneficial to stop the importation of wheat carried on to the extent it now is, because it frequently is imported much under the manufacturer's (in foreign parts) as well as our cost price. (a) Slightly dearer. (b) Would tend to decrease continuity in the long run. (c) Would decrease cost of manufacture considerably, but not cost of production. (d) Would certainly increase employment. (e) Might increase wages.

R. N. HOFLAND, EDDINGTON ROLLER MILLS, HUNGERFORD ; Miller.

Duties should be paid on imported wheat, decreasing to nil at 40s. per qr. Home trade would flourish, people now out of work find employment, and farmers would prosper. But for foreign importations, the mill would have been running double the time, with corresponding increase of employees and wages. Special measures should certainly be taken to guard against dumping.

JOHN TAYLER, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, MELKSHAM, WILTS. ; Miller.

Wheat (not Colonial), 5s. per qr. Our reason for this is that any less duty must fall on one trade, i.e., the bakers, but 5s. being the equivalent of 4s. per sack of 280lbs. on flour would raise the bread exactly $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per quarter and would be fair to all. Raw material from the Colonies free. (a) Prices would rise and should cause more wheat, &c., to be grown in this country. (b) There would then always be more grain in the country, and in the case of war or corners, this country would have more security. (c) Not much change. (d) Would of necessity increase employment. (e) Wages may or may not increase ; they are considerably higher now than they have ever been.

C 677.

A bounty should be given to tenant farmers on acreage under wheat, 5s. or 10s. per acre, to be paid out of duties raised by proposed tariff. The import duty on corn will be paid by the producer and by reduced freights ; the steady increase of Canada's wheat production will in a few years reduce the price of wheat to old level.

M. H. FOSTER, WYMONDLEY, STEVENAGE, HERTFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

Of not much benefit. Duty on corn should be from Colonies, 2s. ; other countries, 5s. ; flour corresponding.

G. OLDEN, SHERFIELD MILL, ROMSEY, HANTS ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

I suggest a tax on all foreign feeding stuffs, especially on manufactured goods of all kinds. Foreign barley is malted in preference to English, on account of cheap production. All foreign corn used for malting purposes should be heavily taxed, whereas English-grown should not be ; this would be a great help to the English farmer. Brewers should be debarred from using chemicals or other foreign matter for making beer (malt and hops only). (a) A rise in price of home productions. (b, c, d, e) Yes.

W. HAWKESLEY & Co., CHARMOUTH MILLS, DORSET ; Millers.

Should think, if a moderate duty were enforced, more corn would be grown in this neighbourhood, and so cost of delivery would be lighter and labour increased, as, at present, nearly all our corn lands are laid down to grass that formerly had corn, consequently farm hands are not required. A duty should be imposed on corn and on any manufactured article, or on any article if labour is laid out on it abroad. This would enable the necessary labour to be laid out in our country.

G. D. HOLT, HOLDEABY MILL, NORTHAMPTON ; Farmer and Miller.

A tax on foreign corn is needed for farmers and labourers, and would increase the revenue of this country, also a tax on foreign articles from countries that tax this country.

C. A. JENN, KINGSLEY VILLA, TOWN MILLS, BLACK TORRINGTON, NORTH DEVON ; Miller.

If the farmers could grow corn as they used to do the price would be a little dearer to commence with, but it would get cheaper as the thing worked on. Special measures ought to be taken—a duty placed on their goods. I have been in the business since I was 14 years of age and now I am over 80, and through the free trade system I have lost my capital, which is certainly a bad policy of the Government, and if not altered will, I

1498

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am afraid, drive many a farmer from the land. England is one of the best wheat-growing countries in the world, and really English farmers would have continued to grow wheat had they been sure of making 4s. 6d. or 5s. per bushel. I have bought wheat that has been grown in the same field 3 years in succession and the third year has almost been better than the first.

T. & H. KING, LTD., GREAT CHESTERFORD, S.O., ESSEX; Millers, Merchants and Farmers.

A small duty upon imported wheat, the raw material, say a minimum of 2s. per qr. up to a maximum of 5s. per qr., and a slightly higher duty upon flour, the manufactured article, proportionately rather higher than that on wheat. (a) Somewhat to raise the price of wheat, but not to the full amount of the imposed duty. (b) To stimulate the growth of English wheat, thus insuring a larger stock of available food supplies in this country, and thereby making us less dependent upon the foreign grower. (c) With increased attention to the cultivation of wheat, and by careful selection of seed, the yield per acre might be increased, thereby reducing the cost of production per qr. (d) To require more labour upon the land generally, and much more upon that which would again be turned from grass to arable. Manufacturers in this country, having to pay such considerable and increasing rates, are unfairly handicapped against the foreigner, who has the free run of our markets. A duty, as suggested, would remove this inequality.

T. REES, PRIORRESS MILL, NEAR USK; Miller and Corn Dealer.

Wheat and flour; about 4s. per quarter on wheat and 3s. per sack on flour, with a preference for Colonial and Indian produce. It may have the effect of raising the price of wheat and flour a little only, but with a preference on Colonial produce, it would be an incentive to the development of the Colonies (especially Canada). In a very few years prices would be lower than ever, in fact, the British consumer would not only have the cheapest loaf he ever had, but the best loaf ever seen, owing to the good quality of Manitoba wheat.

1502

WM. ASHBY, WHATLINGTON MILL, BATTLE S.O. SUSSEX; Miller.

There is not $\frac{1}{4}$ of the wheat grown that might be, if it would pay. It would want at least 5s. per qr. duty to enable English farmers to grow it, as it costs about £15 per acre to prepare the ground. Oat growing is not so expensive—a duty of about 1s. 6d. per qr. would be enough. It does not seem quite right to let agriculture get in such a ruinous state, as it makes a great difference to the labouring class, the tenant farmers and land owners. It is through the foreign supply. Suggested duty on flour 2s. 6d. per sack. It would cause flour and bread to be about 1d. per gallon dearer; would increase labour, and raise wages. The labourer is paid well for his work; the farmers who produce their food get no pay for their labour. It is quite time there was something done to help the farmers, also the business class of industry, which are now burdened up with rates and other expenses so that there is no profit or comfort in business. We want a duty on the manufactured goods sufficient to keep up the cost price, and not burden the English manufacturer with taxes and restrictions which incur expenses. I used to convert about 100 qrs. of wheat for house consumption yearly. It is reduced to about 5 qrs. now, and my little trade is preparing poultry and pig food.

1503

FORM No. 4,914. Corn Merchant.

2s. per quarter on wheat is of no use to the farmer, not enough to affect price of this article, as its price is ruled by supply and demand. One thing, if we have a duty on wheat we want double that amount on the equivalent in flour so as to encourage our millers to grind more here, which would tend to keep offal, such as middlings, bran, &c., cheaper. This would be a great help to the farmer, as it would also keep down price of maize, meats, linseed and cotton cakes. I do not mind wheat coming in free if we can get a good tax on flour. If you tax the manufactured article farmers will have to pay more for their machines, &c., so they want something in return. If you allow our Colonies to send in free and tax others I believe wheat will be cheaper in, say, 20 years time than it is now, as it would bring a lot more land under cultivation to wheat in Canada, India, and perhaps Egypt and South Africa.

M. M. HOBSON, HARPERLEY MILLS, ANNFELD PLAIN, R.S.O.; Miller, Corn Merchant, &c.

A duty on any of the articles would not affect me as far as I can see, but a duty on grain imported from foreign countries, which can be produced at home or in our Colonies, would not, in my opinion, raise the price to the extent of the duty, but would encourage the production more at home and in our Colonies and consequently give more employment and bring more land into cultivation.

C 413. Farmer.

Feeding stuffs and manures should be on the "Free List," as a set-off against the low duty on wheat, which the scheme proposes. Seeing the national importance of a larger supply of wheat being grown and stored in this country, a bonus or bounty of 5s. per qr. upon the amount produced and sold for food is the most effective and satisfactory way of attaining that object, and at the same time helping the agricultural industry.

1504

C 582. Farmer.

I thoroughly agree that if Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy is carried out, it will be of vast advantage to the trade and commerce and slightly to agriculture owing to the increased prosperity of the country. But as an inducement for agriculturists to commence and till land that has for years, owing to low prices, been lying derelict, 2s. per quarter duty would be of very little avail. Mr. Chamberlain proposed transferring the duty now on tea, tobacco, &c., to corn, and by so doing not to raise the price of food. On similar lines would it not be feasible to transfer part of the duty now on beer to imported barley? Mr. Gladstone, in 1880, transferred the then duty of about 22s. 8d. per quarter for malting, to the beer brewed. At present I think the duty is about 7s. 9d. per barrel of beer. Presuming that there are 4 barrels of beer produced from one quarter of barley, the duty would be 31s. leaving a difference of about 8s. per quarter of a greater tax than before Mr. Gladstone made the transfer. Why not, at least, have 4s. of the duty taken off the beer

1505 Remedial Measures

Wheat, Barley, Oats —continued.

production of 1 quarter barley, and put on imported barley? It would also be necessary that Indian corn or any other substitutes used in brewing should be taxed, so as to give the home growers a chance of extending their tillage, giving more employment and so keeping a rural population from going into the towns, or worse still leaving the country altogether.

J. MILNE & Co., LTD., CALEDONIAN MILLS, ABERDEEN; Pearl Barley Manufacturers and Millers.

Pot and pearl barley, 4s. per sack of oatmeal of 280 lbs. It is all important that measures should be taken to prevent manufactured cereals, such as pot and pearl barley, oatmeal and flour being imported into this country under cost price, but the only possible check we can see is to have such a duty put on those articles as will prevent their being sent in manufactured at all. The grain, if allowed into this country in its raw condition, free of duty, can all be milled here, employing British capital and British labour and benefiting the agriculturist, and through him all classes without a penny of extra cost to the consumer. It is only changing the incidence, and doing at home for our own profit what at present we permit to be done abroad to our loss. British millers of pot and pearl barleys and oatmeal would be put on a fair basis to compete against foreigners who can, at present, undersell us by lower costs in wages, &c., and who have protection in their own countries where they get prices which enable them to cut prices on our markets. If our raw barley came in duty free, the cost of manufactured barley would not be increased to the consumer, only the miller would be freed from the present incubus of unfair foreign competition. In oatmeal, cheap and inferior oatmeal is flung on our markets from U.S.A. and Canada, to the detriment of our farmers, who, consequently, get lower prices for their oats—and also, and this is a great point, have to pay higher prices for feeding stuffs than they would have to do if all the pot and pearl barley, oatmeal and flour were milled in this country.

T. SCOTT, HARRY MILLS, ORKNEY; Miller.

Oats and barley, 2s. 6d. per quarter; flour and meal, 1s. 6d. per boll. The above suggestion, if adopted, would enable me to pay freight, &c., on imported grain. This country could manufacture all the food stuffs required, and would be in a position to compete with foreign countries, and then having a demand for such food stuffs, &c., would also be able to employ more hands, and pay them higher wages. When free trade was first established, America, Germany, and all other nations and colonies, from which trade of all kinds is now run into Britain, were not what they are now. Times are now changed, and although free trade proved a blessing at one time, it is evident that ere long it will prove a curse to this nation. We want fair trade but not free trade. Not only in the interests of millers, but in that of all the farming community of Britain, special measures against dumping are required.

C 1,012. Farmer.

May I suggest that the following would greatly help the farmers without hurting any one, viz.: put a big tax on all foreign barley, other than from our Colonies, for the following reason. Brewers, to-day, use a very big percentage of maize, from 17 to 25%. It is next to impossible to use maize without using a big percentage of foreign malt—hence the price of barley dropping during the last 15 years from 40s. to 20s. Of course the brewer will say he cannot afford this tax, which, in my opinion, is quite true, so why not meet him and drop so much tax per barrel of beer. If we could stop the brewer from using maize or even such a large quantity, it would help the farmer to an enormous extent.

CHAS. T. PAVY, HAZELAND MILL, CALNE, WILTS.; Miller.

If foreign barley has import duties imposed and foreign bacon not, it will cut both ways, this being a district in which many are engaged in pig feeding, and the barley meal trade is large in consequence.

S. T. DEWING, BURNHAM OVERY, NORFOLK; Miller and Merchant.

Foreign barley should be taxed to help the English farmer more heavily than wheat, as it is grown much more in our district.

C 260.

The tax on barley would be more popular than on wheat. We do not care to feed stock with barley, we would rather sell to make beer, and we are very severely hit by foreign barley.

J. GRIFFIN, SANDFORD MILLS, SHERBORNE, DORSET; Miller.

I buy mostly foreign barley and maize to grind and sell in meal and corn. I think that a small duty would not affect us at all if it were permanent, but I lost money on it when it was put on for a short time, as I had meal sold forward, and had to work it at a loss, and I also had some mill offals bought to arrive, and had to pay a duty on it, which was a loss, as the duty was taken off again before it was all cleared. Foreign corn fluctuates in price, and I do not think a small permanent duty would affect it at all.

W. PURVES, CASTLETOWN, THURSO; Farmer and Miller.

Oatmeal and barley meal, 8s. per ton. If, as should be, free import from the Colonies, is continued, there seems no room for any change in prices, continuity or security, cost of production, or anything else. In the interests of fair play, there should be no dumping allowed. It could be prevented by a countervailing duty equal to the bounty or other advantages enjoyed.

J. INGLIS & SONS, MID-LOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

Oatmeal, 1s. per cwt.; rolled oats, 1s. per cwt. If such duties were imposed, there would be an increased demand for home-grown grain, and farmers would be enabled to cultivate land that is at present out of cultivation. More labourers would be kept on the land and many mills, now idle, would find employment; more men employed directly and indirectly, and local tradesmen and merchants required. Where there is more

1506

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employment wages would advance. More coal required, &c., &c. Dumping should most certainly be provided against, and a charge made sufficient to cover all local and imperial taxes which the foreigner does not now contribute anything to. We suggest, say, 1s. per cwt. on all manufactured food stuffs, and something also on the raw material.

J. ALEXANDER & SON, NETHER JUSTICE MILLS, ABERDEEN; Millers.

Foreigners can sell oatmeal at a price at which we cannot make it, and a tariff would help our trade greatly.

A. CRAWFORD & SON, 20, MILL STREET, BELFAST; Wheaten Starch and Corn Flour Manufacturers.

Starch

Wheaten starch should have a duty of 10%; special measures against dumping are required. When foreign starch is offered here at a price which is manifestly below cost, in addition to the suggested general duty of 10%, an additional duty should be imposed in such cases equal to the difference between the actual cost of production and the price at which the starch is offered. (a) While prices might not be higher these duties would keep out of the home market a great deal of foreign starch which is sent here and sold under cost price. (b) We believe it would tend to steady prices and prevent the foreigner from dumping his stuff on our markets, to the insecurity and dislocation of our home trade. (c) It would tend to cheapen prices, as the larger demand would tend to reduce the cost of production by a larger turnover. (d) 30 years ago there were 7 or 8 makers of wheaten starch in Belfast; to-day we are the only makers left here, while the quantity we produce is less than half what it was 10 years ago. This unsatisfactory condition of the Irish wheat starch manufacture is mainly due to unfair foreign competition, and as a consequence, instead of being able to give increased employment, we are only able to employ about one-half the number of men we did some years ago. (e) Wages would naturally increase if the trade were in a healthier condition.

FORM No. 2,709. Manufacturers of Indian Corn (maize) Starch.

The American duty on Indian corn (or maize) starch is about 90 % to 100 %, but we think a very great deal less would do for this country, say 20 %, or so. Prices might be a little dearer, but not much, as the consumption of home manufactured goods would be greatly increased, hence less cost in the manufacture. There would, of course, be a greater demand for labour, which would cause better wages, but the main point is that unless some change is made in the fiscal policy, there will be no demand for labour, and little or no wages. As we say, on Indian corn starch the American duty is 1½ cents per lb., and on British gum (or dextrine) it is 2 cents per lb. This is a very heavy duty on the starch, being nearly 90 to 100 %, and on the dextrine, about 60 %; a third less would be sufficient to protect this country. A protective duty should be imposed on manufactured goods, but not on raw material.

FORM No. 2,841. Rice Starch Manufacturers.

We know of nothing else which could be of interest except that 20 years ago there were 8 firms manufacturing rice starch in London alone, but to-day there are only 2 including ourselves, and as the oldest firm in the trade we do not hesitate to assert that unless some relief comes to this industry, the manufacture of rice starch in England will be a thing of the past. It would affect prices very little, because a duty upon starch would exclude much of the foreign, and as we could produce 30% more without any increase in our standing expenses, i.e., rates, value of premises, salaries to heads of departments, insurances, &c., &c., the cost of production would be greatly reduced. It would naturally increase employment largely, and it would increase wages per head.

H. LEAKE & SON, LTD., KING'S LYNN OIL MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK; Seed Crushers.

Oil and Cake

Linseed cake, 10s. a ton; linseed oil, 10s. a ton. (a) A rise of about 5s. a ton in the price of linseed cake. Nothing on the price of linseed oil, the extra quantity oil made at home would probably result on lower prices, and force an export against other countries' duties. (b) A very speculative trade, and would remain so; at first profits would be larger, but increased production would soon reduce them again. (c) A larger output would reduce cost of production. (d) Should have to double our mills, resulting in double number of men, and increase of machinery and plant. (e) Any general system of such protective duties must raise wages; we should find great difficulty in obtaining hands, as everybody would be requiring more.

H. M. LEASK & Co., 14 to 19, SIR JOHN ROGERSON'S QUAY, DUBLIN; Linseed Cake Manufacturers, &c.

Linseed cake; decorticated cotton seed cake; compound feeding cake. We consider it necessary to impose a duty of 15s. per ton on imported cakes. (a) It would reduce the price to the consumer, owing to the larger production, enabling us to manufacture cheaper. (d) As production would be very much larger, employment would increase in ratio. (e) As demand for labour would increase, wages would increase.

EARLES & KING, LTD., 17 & 18, EXCHANGE BUILDINGS, LIVERPOOL; Linseed and Cotton Seed Crushers.

Linseed cakes, £1 a ton; cotton cake, £1 a ton. We are not in a position to say that any of the articles competing with us are offered below cost price. (a) The price to consumers would be raised. (b) The home trade would secure the trade now given to foreign manufacture. (d) The consumption being larger of home manufacture, more men would necessarily be employed.

CROWN CORN OIL CAKE & CHEMICAL MANURE CO., LTD., HULL; Cake and Chemical Manure Manufacturers.

Oil cake, £1 per ton. If we had no foreign competition we could run our mills all the year round, instead of say, 8 months; plenty of competition to keep prices from rising much; at present we cannot crush seeds to pay corn cost, leaving out any question of profit. If there were more work, wages would rise through supply and demand. Foreigners put on a duty of many pounds per ton on English oil; they crush seed, keep oil for own market, and send cakes (by products for them) to our market, and having spoilt our oil market spoil our cake market at home.

W. GAYMER & SON, ATTLEBOROUGH, NORFOLK ; Apple Growers and Cider Manufacturers.

From a manufacturer's point of view, apples, in our opinion, should be imported free, but an English fruit grower would probably have a contrary opinion. If any tax were imposed, we would prefer Canadians should be exempted before Americans. American being a great rival to us in the importation of cider, we should suggest a duty equivalent to their own, viz., in wood, 10d. per gallon ; in bottle, 1s. 8d. We cannot say if American cider is imported into England below cost price, but some measures are required to prevent this being done, and there should be a duty equivalent to that which the U.S.A. Government puts on imported cider. (a) We think no material difference in the price of our own home-grown product would be made, inasmuch as if we tried for an advance in prices the public would then go for the cheap, light continental wines. (b) Being protected, English and colonial growers of cider fruit would be encouraged by the stimulus given to produce larger quantities, so that cider makers feeling more certain of being able to find raw material more easily at home, would by that very means be enabled to compete with the American imports, especially as our home grown fruit will produce a better article than cider from American apples. (c) We think this would not be affected. (d) As above mentioned, if all these conditions were fulfilled, greater employment would follow, in our opinion. (e) Speaking from personal experience, as we have to employ skilled men and pay them a uniform and good wage, we do not think we could afford to pay more than we do now. In bad years or good our men are always paid alike with no loss of time.

HALES, DANCY & Co., LTD., BRIGHTON ; Fruit Merchants, &c.

If a small duty were put on our imports, say 1d. or 2d. per package on small packages of fruit, and 3d. to 6d. on large (and same with potatoes), that tax would be paid by the country from whence we import. For example: Our trade is more than half commission trade, growers and merchants sending their goods to us to sell, we deducting cost of carriage, commission, charges, &c., and sending the balance. If a tax were placed on our imports, to be collected by the rail and shipping companies, we should simply deduct that in addition.

C 641. Farmer.

Farming is the principal trade of the country, and market gardening an important branch of it. Loss is sustained by foreign straw plait being brought in free, as well as pickling onions in the brine. Both these articles would come under the head of manufactured goods, I suppose. I regret to say I hear to-day that the first consignment of foreign Brussels sprouts arrived in Covent Garden market last Tuesday, the second in Spitalfields market yesterday. This is most serious to this district. Not only do the gardeners themselves depend upon these Brussels sprouts, but the gathering of them employs the labourers all winter. What is to become of the latter if the foreigners make these sprouts unprofitable? Therefore, it is to be hoped that the Commission will see their way to recommend a duty of some sort on foreign vegetables.

E. BIERMANN & Co., HOPE STREET, CARDIFF ; Fruit and Vegetable Merchants.

It would be difficult, in our opinion, to apply tariffs to highly perishable goods without hampering the trade considerably.

GEORGE BUNYARD & Co., LTD., MAIDSTONE ; Market Gardeners.

Foreign grown goods, as roses, Dutch bulbs and shrubs, flood our markets and auction rooms and have practically killed the bulb trade. French roses and fruit trees are largely sent to this country free of duty. A duty should be put on all these articles, which, being grown by cheap labour paid for very much longer hours than British workmen keep, seriously handicap our nursery trade. The free import of the goods named above to which I might add Japanese lilies and plants, leads me to the conclusion that an *ad valorem* duty would help British trade and British workmen without raising the price of the goods materially.

E. P. LEACOCK, BEWDLEY, WORCS. ; Farmer.

I would suggest that in the selling of foreign meats, especially bacon, ham, &c., it should be distinctly stated that such articles are not of British production. A vast quantity of stuff is introduced into this country partially cured. It is finished off at different factories by processes into which, I surmise, chemistry largely enters, and then sold as British produce. I think, independent of fiscal reform, a great deal of inquiry is necessary on this subject. For instance, the bacon, &c., from Denmark, to my mind, forms a subject for special examination. From what I learn, the Danish bacon, &c., is cured by some process of injection, and it is therefore palpably unfair that it should be put in competition with English bacon, which has been cured on sound and old-fashioned methods.

D. O. CARBUTT, GRAPTHORPE MILL, NEWARK, NOTTS. ; Miller and Baker.

A duty on foreign bacon and meat generally would assist both farmer and country miller. There would be more home-grown corn used and consequently more manure made for the impoverished land. English wheat cannot compete with foreign for making flour.

FORM No. 5,787. Bacon Curers.

We do not think the price would be appreciably increased, as the foreign is largely sold in lieu of home manufactured goods, often at the same price as English. If an import duty of, say, 10 % were imposed, the trade would more freely introduce the home goods, the margin of profit being equalised by the import duty: whereas at present the foreign is bought at a lower figure than English can be produced at, and sold to the public at about the same price, the middleman pocketing the difference. We do not say foreign bacon is imported below cost ; but the conditions of wages, longer hours of labour and benevolent assistance rendered by foreign governments to encourage their manufacturers to export enable them to take risks of uncertain prices by placing their goods in our markets in such quantities as to depress prices, making it difficult to carry

1517

on a remunerative trade in competition. The only measure we can suggest is import duties; but as bacon enters so largely into the daily food of the masses, though we do not believe they would be disadvantaged, it will be difficult, and almost impossible, to make them believe it if such import duties were imposed.

FORM No. 3,922. Bacon Curers.

(a & b) We do not think there would be any great increase in price if the suggested duties were imposed, as to a great extent they would be paid by the foreign producer, but it might have the effect of preventing such large amounts being dumped on our shores at certain times, and would produce a greater steadiness and continuity of trade. (c, d & e) Would not reduce cost of production, but would increase employment, as turn-over could probably be largely augmented, and would give greater steadiness and continuity and security to wages. A tax as proposed, might prevent dumping, and give greater publicity as to the source of all imported bacon, and methods of preservation and cure, which latter many believe to be injurious to health. Bacon, hams, lard and all pig products not less than 5%; but if barley is taxed, the amount of such import duty should be rateably increased, imported barley being the main food for pigs in this country. Maize is very little used, and is a bad food for pigs.

HILLIER'S BACON CURING CO., LTD., NEWMARKET, NEAR STROUD; Bacon Curers, &c.

(a) Slight advance for first 2 or 3 years, when increased breeding would bring prices back. (b) Would undoubtedly ensure greater stability in the home market, and increase demand. (c) Would materially decrease cost of production—at least 25%. (d) Larger business would necessitate more labour. (e) Increased wages would naturally follow. The whole effect of tariffs is to favour home industries at the expense of foreigners. Bacon, hams and lard, 10%. Steps should most decidedly be taken to prevent dumping. Probably the only means of protection would be by a substantial import duty.

1518

C 443. Bacon Curer.

Looking to Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion that bacon should still be treated as a free import, and that, apparently, on the ground that it is the poor man's food, we cannot appreciate that argument; but, quite apart from that, think we might assert with confidence that that proposal would not meet with acceptance at the hands of Canada, looking to her huge and ever-growing exports of bacon and hams to this country.

FORM No. 3,534. Provision Merchants.

So far as the food products in which we deal (cheese, butter, bacon, flour) are concerned, we can see no great harm in a moderate amount of taxation against the foreigner, with free imports from the British Colonist.

N. KILVERT & SONS, LTD., TRAFFORD PARK, MANCHESTER; Lard Refiners.

Raw lard, no duty; refined or manufactured lard from countries giving reciprocal terms, 5%; other countries, 10%. (a) An advance probably equal to about one-half the duty imposed. (b) It obviously would secure greater continuity. (c) Undoubtedly. (d) We should of course increase our workers correspondingly. (e) This would necessitate offering higher wages.

1519

W. ASPLIN, CHURCH STREET, AMBLESIDE; Butcher and Bacon Curer.

Fat oxen, 5s. per head, not as any safeguard to our interests, but in justice to our own producers. More regular supplies in our home markets would result.

C 532. Farmer.

I would suggest that there should be a question put as to the inconsistency of allowing fat stock and dead meat into the country free of duty, when there is a prohibition against Canadian store cattle, the effect of which is that fat and store cattle are nearly the same price and consequently no margin for profit by fattening.

C 779.

The present bad state of the home meat trade, i.e., killing for the London market, may not be fully known. If, however, such markets as the Manchester Hide Market are considered it will be found that the numbers of hides have fallen in the last few years from some 6,000 per week to 2,000 or 3,000. The Edinburgh, Glasgow and other markets have also fallen very considerably in number of hides and skins. If Canadian cattle were allowed into the country as formerly, i.e. through the country, and a tariff put on frozen meat, the feeding and butchering trades at home would greatly benefit thereby, also the hide and leather trades. The present system makes the home hides through scarcity too dear to compete with foreign when manufactured into leather.

1520

WILSON, KERR & CO., 26, BREAD STREET, EDINBURGH; Provision Merchants.

Margarine, 2s. per cwt.; butter, 2s. per cwt.; all foreign cheese, but not Colonial, 2s. per cwt. We think if 4s. per cwt. were put as a tariff on States cheese, you would soon have most of the factories in Canada, and the same help in the ham and bacon trade would have the same effect. (a) It would be almost imperceptible. (b) It would slightly encourage home goods. (c) It would not perceptibly reduce cost of production. (d) More manufacture at home of butter, cheese and margarine would increase employment certainly. (e) And wages would follow demand for labour. In the interests of our trade there is nothing required excepting in an indirect way. If men are not employed at work, they cannot buy provisions, and we suffer indirectly and very promptly.

Cheese, Butter,
Margarine,
Eggs, &c.

GRASS VALE DAIRY CO., WHEATSHEAF YARD, ST. STEPHEN'S STREET, NORWICH (S. H. BARWOOD); Dairymen.

While protection might enable me to get better price for butter, that higher price would restrict the sale of it. The policy generally would curtail the volume of trade and is likely to produce many evils neither I nor

1521 Remedial Measures

**Cheese, Butter,
Margarine,
Eggs, &c.**
—continued.

the Commission are able to foresee. Duties on dairy produce and not on meat might lead to more home production of the former and less of the latter. The effect on prices would be uncertain. Undoubtedly home production would increase considerably if duties were certain to be permanent.

C 1,556. Egg Dealer.

In the trade the imposition of a 5% duty on imported eggs will be welcomed. It will help to get rid of the foreign coster, who as a rule is very clever in obtaining advances upon speculative eggs, the remains of ancient stocks left over. In the country the shops are filled with local eggs almost to the exclusion of the imported article; and it is a great mistake to think that practical London shopkeepers do not know where to obtain the fresh eggs they need, hall-marked or otherwise. Of course the practical egg-higgler has no need to make a direct appeal to the cupidity of the small poultry keeper, and it is hardly a matter for wonder if weak-headed persons expected unreasonable value from their investments in poultry by joining a society in which the higgler was to be eliminated. I fear that imported eggs will command the situation for urban demands as local eggs will meet the needs of the rural population.

MAYPOLE DAIRY CO., LTD., GODLEY, HYDE, CHESHIRE; Margarine Manufacturers, &c.

A duty of 5% on all imported margarine and margarine mixtures. (a) No effect on prices in the home market, as the Dutch manufacturers would speedily open works in England, thereby improving the demand for British labour and British milk. In countries such as Germany and Belgium, where duties have been imposed on the importation of margarine, practically all the Dutch manufacturers have established works there. (b) It would prevent dumping on the home market. (c) The greater output of, and demand for, the English product would reduce the cost of production quite 2%, possibly much more. (d) Increase employment for British labour by quite 100% on the number now employed. (e) We estimate that the greater demand for labour would increase wages by 5% or 10%.

J. WALLACE & CO., LTD., ROWALLAN CREAMERY, KILMARNOCK; Margarine Manufacturers, &c.

Margarine, 10% minimum. This would necessitate the whole of these goods being manufactured here, and would benefit the agricultural community, the workmen, and their wage-earning power. A sufficient duty to prevent dumping should also be imposed.

FORM No. 2,098. Margarine Manufacturers.

There should be a duty of 10% on margarine. Prices would, in our opinion, remain unchanged in the home market, but the foreigners would be prevented from dumping their surplus goods at a loss in this country, with the result that an increased trade for the home margarine factories would follow, which would naturally reduce their cost prices. Their increased trade would give increased employment to the workers of this country. The rate of wages would not necessarily be increased, but the larger the trade done by the home factories the less the on-cost would be, and therefore the better wages they could afford to pay.

C 89. Dairy Produce Merchants.

Importation of refined cotton oil from the U.S.A.—the Board of Trade returns for 1902 give 247,200 cwts. imported, declared value £310,000. This oil is largely used by margarine and other manufacturers. Urgent attention is now being given to cotton culture in our Colonies, which will result in a larger production and importation of cotton seed, 550,000 tons of which, valued at £3,285,000, were imported in 1902. The proper refining of the cotton oil to render it edible, and of equal quality to the American, is an immensely important business, which could be effectively entered into if an import duty on refined cotton oil were imposed. This would create a most important addition to the home industry, with consequent employment for a large number of workmen. As to imitation lard, lardines, lard compounds, and any other substitutes it is difficult to obtain from the Board of Trade returns the quantity really imported into the U.K.; there is reluctance on the part of the importing houses to give a correct classification to the Customs, and quantities are likely to be returned under "lard." The importations for 1902, under "Imitation lard," from the U.S.A., were 154,267 cwts., declared value, £278,000. This business is at present monopolised by the U.S.A. manufacturers owing to its basis being refined cotton oil. The imposition of an import duty would have the result of securing the whole of this business to this country. These products are exclusively used by the baking, &c., trade; an import duty would secure the expansion of a manufacturing industry to the country, without increasing the price of the food productions, as such a small quantity of these lard compounds is used in proportion to the bulk weight of the article produced. There is no reason why the whole of the immense quantity of margarine imported should not be produced in the U.K., and manufacturers say that in the event of a 10% duty being imposed upon margarines they will remove their factories to this country.

M. UNDERHILL & SONS, 7, HIGH STREET, OXFORD; Merchants.

I only know that I should regard any more duties on foreign goods as a great misfortune. Danish bacon and salt butter compete successfully with English goods because the Danes give better value for money than English farmers. The best English bacon and butter is "the best," but for second quality Danish bacon and butter is better than English at the same money.

FORM No. 4,165. Millers.

I do not consider flour milling is a trade requiring protection against the foreigners, but competition from the port mills is very severe.

J. HAMLIN, LONGFORD MILL, DUNTON GREEN, KENT; Miller and Corn Merchant.

I grind English wheat into flour and buy foreign flour to mix with it, so as to get the required quality; if a higher duty is put upon flour than upon wheat, then, of course, my business is killed at once.

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**Import Duties not
desired**

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FORM No. 3,044. Corn and Meat Offal Merchants and Mixers.

We need supplies, so far as we can obtain them from all over the world. If we should be restricted to our Colonies for supplies, the English consumers (farmers) will suffer heavily by having to pay an enhanced price. Americans (North and South) and others, being deprived of this outlet for the offals will have to sell it at a reduced price to their own home consumers and so give them a further advantage in the production of beef and pork. (a) Make them so dear as seriously to cripple the English farmer and cattle feeder in his competition with the foreign cattle breeder, &c. (c) It would increase it. (d) It would diminish it. (e) It would diminish it, if anything.

C 181. Distiller.

Patent still spirit is manufactured from maize, whilst pure malt Scotch whisky is distilled from malted barley. It would, therefore, be unfair to admit the large quantities of maize imported for this purpose and tax the malting barley. If barley is to be taxed, maize, exclusively for feeding, might be free, but all used for spirit manufacture should be taxed at the same rate as barley.

C 3. Distiller.

Indian corn is largely used in the production of grain whisky and if admitted free it is only fair that barley for malting should be admitted free also.

R. E. S. TANNER, RAY MILLS, LACOCK, CHIPPENHAM, WILTS. ; Miller.

It is to the interest of our trade to obtain the foreign barley at as low a price as possible, as the lower the price of barley meal, the more sale it obtains, in competition with other feeding stuffs. We experience no foreign competition, but grind entirely foreign corn. Suggestion (1) A tax on foreign barley and maize would be entirely against the interest of the farmer, who is a large consumer, and any reduction in the price of foreign feeding stuffs would be a benefit to them. (2) Having tried fattening pigs myself and finding it cannot be done at a profit owing to foreign competition in the bacon trade, should like to see the farmer given a little help in this respect, and foreign bacon taxed.

E. J. BRADFELD, WARMINSTER ; Miller.

No duty should be imposed on wheat. Duty on wheat would raise price of flour to the amount of the duty. We may even get a profit on the duty for a time. The liability to have duty altered each year would be a great disadvantage, and the ultimate result in my opinion would be unsatisfactory. I consider that an import duty on wheat will help the large port mill, and would be the ruin of country mills. If I can give any useful information I will, but remembering the loss when 1s. was put on, and the worry when it was taken off, and seeing that any increased profit in our trade must be paid by the consumer, I prefer to stay as at present, the worry and uncertainty is bound to come, the profit is not so sure as the bread eaters will very naturally object. Flours do not come below cost price except in so far as any firm either at home or abroad may, at exceptional times, prefer to turn surplus stock into cash below what it would be profitable to continue selling at. It is done pretty considerably by firms at home when occasion seems to warrant, and I have not yet heard that any feeling for other members of the trade weighs against their own convenience or necessity.

B. MALLISON, WEETOX MILL, HELLINGLY, SUSSEX ; Miller, &c.

None at present, as foreign goods do not affect me. I am a miller, a baker, and a poulterer. I cannot mill foreign wheat, my mill not being adapted to treat it, and, as a baker and poulterer, any tax whatever on my raw material (grain and flour) would be detrimental to me ; in fact any great rise in the price of grain might have the effect of closing my poultry business altogether, and, perhaps, that of my mill also, as the poultry industry is its principal source of income.

C 3,633. Corn and Hay Merchant.

Cheap food is the first essential for this country : the imported corn and meat are grown under more favourable conditions than our own, and we can exchange them for our manufactures which keep our people employed at better wages, and in greater comfort than on the land. The registration fee of 1s., imposed by Sir M. Hicks Beach, and wisely abolished by Mr. Ritchie, was an impost on the horse owner and raised the price of his most important raw material 15s. per annum per animal—the stock feeder also suffered and the consumer indirectly through him. It made, however, little or no difference in the price of bread. Tariffs would injure our great entrepot trade and be a curse. We are importers of grain, which we supply for feeding purposes to the carmen contractors, bus and cab proprietors and horse owners of London and district, and, as our commodities are an important raw material of their business, a tax of any kind is a serious and special impost upon their industry.

FORM No. 4,554.

Nothing comes into this country too cheaply. The cheaper the better. Dear things make bad trade. The mill trade in this country is a match for any foreign country, and no duty will do any good, as the dock-side mills have got all the trade, and will keep it, because wheat is such a low price, and farmers can grow something better. If a duty were placed on imported flour it would do good because there would be more flour manufactured in this country, and it would be the cause of more offals for feeding stock. As for duty on wheat, barley, maize and all feeding stuffs, it would do harm both to the country miller and farmer, as a farmer cannot live by growing corn alone, he must keep a lot of stock. I know many farmers and do business with them, but I do not know bad trade with those who keep a lot of stock.

HORSNAILL & REYNOLDS, STROOD, KENT ; Seed and Corn Merchants.

We are importers of corn, principally oats. A tax on corn lessens our business, and, therefore, injures us personally. Our customers also are the losers as having to pay more for their article. The country also

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as a whole must surely thus suffer, since there will be less money to spend in other things than at present under free trade. Therefore we cannot see any advantages in a tax on imports, except, perhaps, occasionally, for purely revenue purposes, and then we think it should be placed, as now, on such articles as tea and tobacco, which cannot be grown here, so as to interfere as little as possible with home trade.

T. WILLIAMSON & Co., CUPPIN STREET, CHESTER; Corn Merchants, &c.

We have no direct experience, but venture the opinion from 30 years of the corn trade, that no amount of tariff would compensate British farmers eventually against the extra price of their feeding stuffs, which, in the county of Cheshire, is a very considerable item.

F. CHASTON, STEAM MILLS, GREAT SHELFORD, CAMBS.; Miller.

I doubt if a duty on imported flour would much help a country miller. Some scheme that would induce English farmers to grow more wheat would benefit country millers.

T. SMITH, SANDHOLME MILL, GARSTANG, LANCASHIRE; Miller and Farmer.

Flour ought to be produced cheaper in England than any other country, and should be one of our principal exports, seeing we are the greatest and cheapest sea-borne carriers in the world, and having the products of practically the whole grain producing countries tendered in our markets, the manufacturers can blend the different sorts of wheats together to produce a cheaper and better article, and adapted to suit any class of customer better than any other country can possibly do. This blending of different wheats, the value of the by-products for the dairy industry, and labour created in manufacture, are of very considerable importance

F. WHELDON, 333, GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C.; Miller.

If a detrimental duty is placed on foreign flour, our business would be ruined. It is not a fact that the milling industry in this country is declining. The large port millers' businesses have very much increased, and they are still building more mills.

MUNGO GRAY & Co., LTD., 4, LLOYD'S AVENUE, LONDON, E.C.; Hay and Straw Merchants.

Increasing enormously, and naturally so with the needs of the country, which cannot under any circumstances produce what is required. 25 years ago the import was practically nil. Now it runs to 67,000 tons per week. The splendid quality produced abroad, and the ease in handling them, through being nicely baled, has quite overcome the prejudice against foreign goods, except in the most conservative quarters. Foreign fodder will always be in use in a greater or lesser proportion—with or without duty. With English hay at 70s. per ton, and foreign at 60s., let us impose a duty of 5%; foreign hay reckoned 10s. worse than home would not be so in value, and purchases abroad would require to be made at 3s. per ton less to keep the same level. Should scarcity enable the English grower to get the duty imposed, as in all likelihood it would seeing we have no surplus in this country, the net result would be an increase in the cost of fodder to the consumer.

E. S. HOULDER, SWINESHEAD, BOSTON; Miller and Baker.

As far as my opinion goes, I do not think a duty on foreign corn will be a benefit in this district, because such a small duty is proposed; it will not benefit the farmer, and it will fall on our trade, as it did in the time of the war. As a large grazier I should strenuously object to any duty or tariff on linseed, rape seed, cotton seed or the feeding cakes manufactured therefrom abroad, as this would more than offset any advantage from the duty on foreign meat, live or dead.

Proposed Duty on Corn and Flour

(L1) PROPOSED DUTY ON CORN AND FLOUR.

QUESTION 9 (FORMS V. AND VIII.):—*The duty on corn suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, is as follows: a 2s. per quarter duty on corn, except maize, with a corresponding duty on flour, giving a substantial preference to the miller, Colonial corn being admitted free. How far, in your opinion, is this proposal calculated to be of assistance or benefit to you in the branches of agricultural industry in which you are engaged? If such duties were imposed what, in your opinion, would be the effect (a) upon prices in the home market; (b) in securing greater continuity and security in the home trade; (c) in reducing cost of production; (d) in increasing employment; and (e) in increasing wages?*

Beneficial

123 farmers, nearly all of whom give their names and addresses in various parts of the United Kingdom, make a more or less simple declaration in favour of the proposed duties, in that they would be of benefit to British agriculture and milling generally, turning in many cases a profit into a loss, and be also a means of strengthening the Empire. The following are typical of this class of reply:—"I agree all grain should be taxed, and flour also, as it would tend to benefit agriculture generally." "The duty proposed by Mr. Chamberlain would mean a profit instead of loss." "The proposed duty would help the whole community, and would, I feel satisfied, help our Colonies and the Empire." "Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion *re* duty on corn and flour is an ideal one for the British farmer and labourer combined."

H. MORTON ODLUM, RATHANGAN, KILDARE; Farmer.

This would be most beneficial to the agriculturist, not only in raising the price of corn, but in starting again the milling industry, thereby creating a local market for the wheat grown in each district. This would beneficially affect the labouring classes, as more land would undoubtedly be tilled.

MAJOR R. H. B. GALBRAITH, J.P., LOUGHREA, CO. GALWAY; Farmer.

In my opinion the proposed duty on foreign corn and flour would be of very great benefit to this neighbourhood, and to Ireland at large. At first it might increase the price of flour, the staple food of the

1533

peasantry of Connaught, but eventually, when the Colonial supply, supplemented by an increased home produce, came freely to hand, the consumer would benefit in a very substantial manner. The great water-power of this country, now running to waste, would be utilised, and the many derelict mills would be busy, giving employment and materially increasing the wealth of the country by the production of flour, thus encouraging the growing of wheat by creating a ready market. The by-products of home-ground flour, such as bran, pollards, &c., would be another great adjunct to the feeding stuffs for the farmer, who cannot afford to use these stuffs in sufficient quantities at their present prices in Co. Galway. In the West of Ireland bran as well as flour is practically all imported, flour at 11s. to 12s. per cwt. and bran at 7s. 6d. to 8s. per cwt. being the ruling prices. The increase of straw would naturally follow the increased growth of wheat, also to the farmers' benefit.

W. H. TWAMLEY, BALLITONE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

Such a duty would be of great assistance to Irish agriculturists, and I hope Mr. Chamberlain will gain his point in Parliament. It is very wrong to allow foreign flour in without duty and have so many of our Irish flour mills closed.

F. W. McILWAIN, DUNMORE LODGE, CARRIGANS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

This tax would be a great benefit to Irish agriculture.

1534

H. D. SMYTH, CLOYNE, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

I think this duty should be a benefit to all farmers.

J. HUGHES, KILMANAHAN, THOMASTOWN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

A 2s. tax on corn would be a great advantage to me in every way. I quite agree with Mr. Chamberlain's policy.

F. C. EDWARDS, HARLOW, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain would be a benefit to agriculture.

A. AYLMER, RATHMORE, NAAS, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

A duty on corn, and more particularly flour, would be of great benefit. I have 2 mills here, one in ruins, the other I use to crush oats for farmers stall feeding, &c. When the mill which is working breaks down, it would not be worth my while to repair it. It only works now and again during the winter to crack oats. With few exceptions, the water-power mills in the country are in ruins. We must assume that free imports of corn and flour are the reasons for this ; all these mills were in full work up to about 40 years ago.

S. CLARKE, NEWTOWN BUTLER, FERMANAGH ; Farmer.

This proposal would be of immense assistance and benefit to all our industries and interests. In my memory a large number of flour-milling establishments were in full work in Ulster ; all now are long since closed from foreign competition.

1535

FORM No. 3,215. Farmers.

It must be an advantage. The duty on flour especially, is calculated to reduce the price of millers offals, largely used for feeding purposes.

R. BAILEY, VIEWFOETH, CROSS, LONDONDERRY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The duty would give British agriculturists a better market for produce, and benefit them to the extent of 2s. per qr. at the expense of their foreign competitors. It will change the conditions, so as to give the farmer a profit on his produce to the extent of the duty on the amount sold by him.

W. FLEMING, AUGHANSILLAGH, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

Flour and meal rule the agricultural market, and when they are cheap everything else is correspondingly cheap. I have no doubt this tariff would materially benefit Ireland. If farmers were compensated for cultivation they would employ more labourers, and poor and rich would be better off than they are now.

1536

EUGENE C. D. COLGAN, BALLYHAST HOUSE, CASTLETOWN, GEOGHEGAN, WESTMEATH, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The duty on corn will raise the price of home produce, thereby making our markets more stable, causing more land to be tilled, and more labour to be employed. The revival of our neglected milling industry will be at hand, feeding stuffs will be bought much cheaper and stock fed at less cost, and to greater advantage in marketing.

J. S. ROGERS, DUNKINEELY, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I quite agree with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. For many years I have observed one trade after another stolen from us by the foreigner and the population diminishing for want of profitable employment. The proposed fiscal reform will affect me in this respect : my land is all in pasture and I would be able to sell to better advantage about 60 head of fat cattle annually, which would realise an increased profit of from 20s. to 30s. per head.

M. W. MORTIMER, ESTATE OFFICE, CULFORD, BURY ST. EDMUNDS ; Farmer.

The duty on corn suggested by Mr. Chamberlain is calculated to be of great assistance to agriculture in this district. It is essentially an arable one, and the effect of the duty must be to increase, if only slightly, the price of corn. The duty on flour would tend to prevent so much being brought into the country, and might

**1537 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Beneficial
—continued.

cause some of the numerous mills in this district to be re-started. This would bring about a lowering of the present absurdly high price of bran, and indirectly help to lower the price of cake and other feeding stuffs. This was plainly seen during the time of the 1s. registration duty on corn. That duty, which I personally deeply regret was ever removed, caused a saving of about £200 on the cake bills here. This duty, by bringing in a large sum to the revenue, would help to lower the burden of the taxation which presses so heavily on landed interests.

WM. FISHER, ESTATE OFFICE, WENTWORTH CASTLE, BARNSLEY, YORKS. ; Farmer.

I am much in favour of this suggestion, believing that it will revive home corn-growing, give zest to farming, and not hurt the consumer.

B. STIMPSON, PARK FARM, BIXLEY, NORWICH, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

I fully agree with Mr. Chamberlain's scheme. We cannot continue to grow wheat at a loss. In fact, farmers ought to agree that they will not cultivate it unless there is a duty on foreign produce.

CAPT. W. S. LEVETT, MILSTATE HOUSE, MILFORD, STAFFORD ; Farmer.

A duty on flour would be of enormous advantage, especially as we should get the use of what is called offal. This offal is now generally detained in the country of production, but would be invaluable for farm feeding purposes.

C. ROBINSON, MARTON, R.S.O., YORKS. ; Farmer.

This advantage would extend to at least 5s. per acre on the corn land. It is almost sad to see all those little country mills go to the dogs and their occupiers and owners with them. This is brought about by unlimited competition in corn and flour. What are left of those, many were given a little stimulus by the small duty or registration tax put on corn two years ago. They began to take heart, when Mr. Ritchie took off the tax, causing dismay on all sides.

G. HYNDMAN, ST. JOHNSTON, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

It would immensely improve the price of oats, which is the principal corn grown in Ulster. It would also give the farmer the benefit of cheap cattle food through maize not being taxed. I fully agree with Mr. Chamberlain and consider we would derive more benefit from his policy than all the Land Acts for the last 34 years put together.

J. KYDD, CARNOUSTIE, FORFAR ; Farmer.

A duty on corn would undoubtedly benefit to some extent, but what would benefit farmers far more (Eastern Forfarshire) would be either the free importation of Canadian store cattle, or, what could meet with little objection from farmers more interested in breeding, the turning of the whole imported cattle into a dead-meat trade. By doing so, the general public would still get the same or a larger supply of foreign beef, but those who actually wished home-fed beef could get it from butchers killing such.

P. BLUNDELL, REAM HILLS, WEETON, KIRKHAM, LANCS. ; Farmer.

If Mr. Chamberlain's suggestions are carried out the prices of the produce from our arable land must improve, and consequently assist in bringing the labourer back to the land.

GEO. COOPER, CANDY GLERACK, DRUMOAK ; Farmer.

The duty of 2s. may increase the price of corn to a small extent. Corn can hardly be raised in this country at the present low price. The increase would benefit me to the extent of at least £25 per annum.

W. DUNCAN KNIGHT, RAPKYNS, HORSHAM, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

I quite approve of the proposed duty, it would prevent me putting the last 10 acres of my land to grass.

G. SMYTH, QUICKSWOOD, BALDOCK, HERTS. ; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on corn would benefit the English grower beyond that amount, considering the large amounts we receive from the U.S., Argentina, &c. A duty upon imported flour is of more importance, as the miller would then have the raw material to manufacture and the farmer would have the benefit of the offals, which are now very dear in relation to the price of wheat. I have given as much per ton for bran as I have made for my wheat. My farm is an arable farm, wheat is still the best crop I can grow, so I think the above proposal would be a great benefit.

J. B. WHITWORTH, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ; Farmer and Miller.

It would benefit land 20s. per acre per annum, and another great advantage would be in the extra supply of millers' offals sold at a lower price than now. This would be a boon to the very small farmers as they all feed pigs and keep cows.

FORM NO. 12,835. Farmer.

It would be of very material advantage, for if corn, and consequently flour, got any dearer, we would grow our own wheat and make our own flour and the bran would be cheaper than it is now. Feeding stuff could be locally produced, more labour could be employed, and on the whole I would consider my position more secure. Free trade from my standpoint has been a great injury to this country, and I would consider anything in the way of a reasonable restriction as a benefit to me.

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E. LONG, J.P., GEASHILL, KING'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

I believe Mr. Chamberlain's proposals calculated to benefit corn growing, and any increase of milling at home would be good for the farmer, by cheapening bran and pollard and reducing cost of cattle feeding, pigs and fowls.

H. EDWARDS, RUTLAND TERRACE, STAMFORD, RUTLAND ; Farmer.

Speaking generally, more wheat would be in demand, consequently the acreage grown would be correspondingly increased—this would benefit the farmer, as of late years wheat growing has been neglected by reason of the non-remunerative prices obtained.

P. S. MARSDEN, HOAR CROSS, BURTON-ON-TRENT, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

If a duty were put upon foreign corn there might be some inducement for the British farmer to plough up instead of seeding down so much grass land.

H. A. WHITTOME, EASTGATE, WHITTLESEA, PETERBORO', CAMBS. ; Farmer.

This would probably benefit us as 1s. per qr. would be a little help to meet the increased cost of labour. Also, we should be able to buy bran and other offal from the millers cheaper, which would be a help to all stock feeders. One thing would help us—that is if the duty on seed potatoes was taken off by France, as we could do a large business, and, considering the quantity of early potatoes imported from France free, I think it only fair we could send seed back free.

R. A. GILFILLAN, THE CROSS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

It would be of distinct benefit to me as a grower of grain, and yet the tariff is so small, it would, I presume, make no practical difference in the cost of housekeeping—any smaller tariff would be undesirable.

W. GAMBLE, D.C., CLAVE, CASTLEBERG, TYRONE ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would add 2s. for every 5 cwt. to the price of farmers' wheat, and for oats 1d. per stone, or 8d. per cwt. Any encouragement given to flour milling would be of advantage to the dairyman in giving us a better quality of bran for feeding, and cheaper in price.

J. A. LONG, J.P., THE CROSS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

The probability is that I in common with many will go to the wall in the battle of life if the suggested duty is not imposed. In common with hundreds in this district with whom I have conversed on the subject, we believe that if it is imposed we can live and thrive in the land of our birth in spite of labour troubles, high taxes and exorbitant rents.

T. H. SHANNON, ANNACRAMP, CALEDON, TYRONE ; Farmer.

It would be of great assistance.

J. FITZGERALD, CARRIGDARRERY, LISSARDA, CORK ; Farmer.

This proposal would be of very great benefit to me and all others engaged in agriculture, and I wish the tax could be doubled. A cheap loaf is no good to us if we cannot buy it.

T. T. PRICE, TYRCAPEL CRAY, BRECON ; Farmer.

It would benefit me a great deal, as I would start mixed farming again, and besides, it would bring back the labourer from the large towns, consequently the land would be farmed better, would look better, and pay better.

W. MOODY, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

Directly, so far as the duty of 2s. per qr. would raise price of oats ; and indirectly, by the cheaper offal resulting from the restarting of local flour and corn mills.

E. J. TURTON, HORKSTOW, HULL ; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on corn would certainly benefit the farmer, although nothing less than 10s. would enable him to grow corn at a profit. The duty on flour would also greatly benefit him ; it would encourage the home milling industry and have a tendency to lower the price of offals, which are so largely used and absolutely necessary.

A. WEIR, F.A.I., STRABANE, DONEGAL ; Auctioneer, Seed and Guano Merchant.

I approve the proposed taxation, the consumer would not feel it, and the farmer would be benefited. Home milling would give employment and the by-products (principally bran) would be available for cattle feeding. The proposed duty is so small that the farmer would scarcely feel the advantage, as a considerable amount of his grain is not turned into cash but fed on the farm, unless the amount raised by the tax be applied by a grant towards local taxation.

P. GEOGHEGAN, D.C., DERBYGLINNA, P.O., MAAM, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

It would increase the acreage under tillage, as at the present rate it is a robbing game to till at all. I am in favour of having duty imposed on both live and dead meat, as it is impossible to pay rent while the foreigner, with land almost rent free, can flood the English markets with his meat free of duty.

J. CORTIS MOUNTAIN, WELBOURNE, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

I consider that I shall obtain a benefit of fully 1s. per qr. on all corn ; and by putting a duty on foreign flour shall benefit considerably, by being able to buy bran and offals at a much reduced price. For some time past bran has cost as much to buy per ton as wheat.

P. DOHENY, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

The duty on corn would undoubtedly be of great advantage to all farmers having arable land. The County of Kilkenny is considered to be some of the best wheat land in Ireland. I know thousands of acres now in pasturage of a poor quality, which would give five-fold the return, and which would be tilled if wheat paid anything over £1 per barrel, and thus give employment to many. One of the chief causes of the decline and impoverishment of Ireland is the enormous quantity of good arable land now in pasturage, which does not pay to till, owing to increase of wages and low prices of corn. Why not put a heavy duty on barley, which produces an article rather of luxury than food, and from which I understand the brewers and distillers derive the chief profit ?

J. STURBY INSOM, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposed duty on corn will be a slight benefit to farmers directly, and no disadvantage. Indirectly, his grand Imperial scheme must benefit the whole trade of the country and consequently agriculture.

A. FINN, LYDD, KENT ; Farmer.

It will benefit by the general increase of employment in milling, and the offal from the mills will be of great use in reducing in price feeding stuffs (cakes, &c.), which I use largely.

W. J. McMINN, THE BUSH, DUNGANNON, TYRONE ; Farmer.

A tax on corn would be a blessing to the poor farmer, who has to make his rents out of the produce ; in fact, it would benefit all farmers largely.

E. R. DAVIS, PIRTON, NEAR HITCHIN, HERTFORD ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn will regulate trade, and prevent foreigners from dumping corn when trade is depressed. In that way it will help us. It is often difficult to sell corn when the market is glutted with foreign, especially barley, as it is not wanted now for beer, and has to be sold for feed. A stiff duty on flour would help us to get offals cheaper, and cause a better demand for our wheat.

J. GORING, IRONBARKS, STAINES ; Farmer and Butcher.

The duty proposed will be an advantage, but to what extent I cannot say. There is no doubt our two great combatants are labour and prices ; it is not so much rent and taxes.

G. L. BOMFORD (Assistant Land Commissioner), OAKLEY PARK, KILLS, CO. MEATH ; Farmer.

Supposing the cost of production remains the same, it would materially add to the profit, without to any appreciable extent increasing the cost to the consumer. For instance, suppose a statute acre of oats to return at present £7, cost of production to be £3, rent £1 ; the profit would necessarily be £3 ; 2s. per qr. would make the return about £7 10s., production and rent as above, profit would increase from £3 to £3 10s., or $\frac{1}{3}$; price would only increase from £7 to £7 10s., or $\frac{1}{4}$. The proposed duty would not do very much towards rapidly increasing area under cultivation, but it would probably keep grain up to a price at which it would pay to grow, it would steadily increase cultivation, set mills going, and give farmers the advantage of a lot of cheap feeding in the way of by-products from the mills.

D. COOK, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Yeoman.

A duty on corn would not only be beneficial to the British farmer, but to the nation at large, and more especially a duty ought to be put on maize, as it is very much used by brewers for manufacturing the so-called malt whisky and beer, to the disadvantage of the English barley grower. Good malting barley, which once made 40s. per qr., is now used for pigs. No less than £150,000,000 of farmers' capital has been lost in the last 25 years, while in innumerable cases farmers have gone bankrupt, have had to leave farms which have been held by their families for generations past. Agriculture has been destroyed by foreign competition ; reformation in our tariff is greatly needed. I hope we shall have a Government that will take the advice of Mr. Chamberlain, and that John Bull will open his sleepy eyes before it is too late.

B. SIMONS, THE GRANGE, WILLOUGHBY, ALFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE ; Farmer, Grazier and Auctioneer.

I entirely agree with the principle, both in the interests of the agricultural and manufacturing districts ; 2s. per qr. cannot operate harshly upon any section of the community. I don't see that 2s. per qr. will materially benefit the farmer directly, as I don't think the price of corn here would be increased appreciably, hence the idea that the tax will not be injurious even to the workers ; but surely with an increased revenue to the Exchequer of nearly £5,000,000 the farmer ought to receive some benefit in relieved taxation. Flour should be taxed at least 5s. per qr., and wheat, say 2s., offering an inducement for the importation of wheat as against flour, thus making work for our own people in milling, and providing the farmer with the residuals which he needs.

P. F. ASTILL, COSSINGTON, LEICESTER ; Farmer.

The duty may increase the value of produce 2s. 6d. an acre, or nearly 2 %. I do not think this small increase will more than cover the extra expenses incurred in paying a slightly higher price for labour, implements, &c. I do not agree with maize being free, as it is the greatest competitor with all the lower grades of English cereals.

1549

D. H. HEAVEN, DRIFFIELD, CIRENCESTER, GLOS. ; Farmer.

The 2s. per qr. would make 8s. per acre better on, say, 60 acres per annum. The duty on flour should be 1s. per cwt. to prevent it coming in, and being made in England we should get the offals at a cheaper rate. Maize should come in free, likewise linseed and cotton-seed; otherwise feeders of stock would be at a disadvantage.

THOMAS EVERITT, NORTH CREAKE, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

I think a duty on flour larger than any that may be put on corn would be of great benefit to the farmer, as it would undoubtedly bring down the price of bran, &c., and it follows, of course, that if we import wheat instead of flour, we find employment for our mills and millers.

FORM No. 12,224. Auctioneer and Estate Agent.

It should benefit the farmer by bringing a larger proportion of wheat to be ground here, and so get the offals to use for feeding; by employing more labour here, and getting a large revenue without hurting the taxpayer.

D. ALEXANDER, BLACKMORE, ESSEX ; Farmer.

On most corn farms 2s. on foreign corn and 1s. per cwt. on flour would pay the labour bill.

1550

P. R. GRAY, ATHY, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

Owing to my land being under cultivation, I consider a 2s. duty per qr. on corn should benefit me to the extent of at least 1s. per bag of 16 st. of barley. But as an inducement to a farmer who has wheat land lying uncultivated for a number of years, I am fully persuaded he would not recommence to sow wheat owing to a 2s. per qr. duty. There should be a higher duty put on flour than on the wheat, so that the mills of the United Kingdom might get their machinery again in motion. The milling and agricultural interests are very closely connected, and what would benefit the miller would also benefit the farmer by his getting cheaper offal for feeding purposes. Besides, it would be a means of bringing out the people to the rural districts. I think that there should be a tax upon imported barley, say, of 4s. per qr.

G. FISKE, BRAMFORD, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

I think Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would be an advantage to farmers, but the duty on flour should be much more. I think they will benefit the manufacturer more than the farmer, and may induce our young men to leave us more than ever.

C. J. GRIEVE, BRANXHOLM PARK, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

This duty of 2s. will be of great benefit to the country generally, and maize being free is a benefit to me personally for buying extra winter feed for sheep.

1551

R. GRIEVE, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

A duty on corn would be an advantage to me, as the arable farmer would get a better price for his grain, and would be able to pay a higher price for live stock.

FORM No. 12,070. Farmer.

It will benefit agriculture in many ways, viz., causing more corn to be ground and making bran and other offals cheaper and more plentiful. At present bran is often very high, almost prohibitory for the uses of the farm. It will also cause more work to be done in mills which have almost been shut up; more men wanted, which will give us more demand for our beef and mutton; in fact, no industry can be benefited without indirectly helping agriculture.

ALFRED PARTON, LEA HALL, NANTWICH ; Farmer.

It would be a good thing to impose a duty as suggested, for this reason—if a duty was put on flour it would be a good thing to me as a dairy farmer, inasmuch as it would cause grain to be milled in this country. Therefore, we should be able to get offals much cheaper. It would restore a large amount of business and labour. Mills that are now going to decay would be opened again. I was informed by a miller in a very large way of business that the small duty imposed two years ago had an almost instantaneous and beneficial effect on his industry.

1552

P. FRIZELL, LISBY HOUSE, BALLYGAWLEY P.O., CO. TYRONE.

It will open up a better market and encourage the growth of cereals, restart the many mills over the country that have been shut up for years, and consequently give more employment.

FORM No. 12,119. Farmer.

The duty on corn, with a corresponding duty on flour, will lead to cheaper offals, as more corn will be milled in this country. As the offals are in demand for feeding purposes, I expect to benefit slightly in the decreased cost of the same. The corn duty will, I trust, increase the demand for home-grown cereals, and, therefore, I shall have a better chance of disposal at advanced prices.

M. WESTROPP, J.P., KILDIMO, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn would be a splendid thing for this country. The poor man would not feel it, as we could grow more, employ more labour, and be able to give better wages. A little time ago there were in this

**1553 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Beneficial
—continued.

district about 20 mills running with steam and water power; all are now shut, and the people employed in them gone to America. Feeding stuff for cattle should not be taxed. As regards the poor man, he could not rear his calves or fatten his pig if he did not get the stuff cheap.

W. FORRESTER ADDIE, ESTATE OFFICE, POWIS CASTLE, WELSHPOOL, MONTGOMERY; Estate Agent.

Although Mr. Chamberlain's proposal of a 2s. duty on corn will undoubtedly help, it can only be to a small extent, and will not be appreciably felt by farmers, at any rate at present. But, as part of Mr. Chamberlain's general scheme for Tariff Reform, the proposal is welcomed by agriculturists, in view of the fact that the general scheme will bring about better trade, and increased prices. But this is mainly a grass county, and largely interested in producing beef, mutton and horses. Of course, in view of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals as to the duty on flour, the fact that his scheme would result in bringing into this county a much larger quantity of the raw material would stimulate the milling industry, and produce a much larger quantity of offals at a much less cost—an important item in the conduct of stock and dairy farms.

W. KELLY GREHAN, ROSCOMMON, CO. ROSCOMMON; Farmer.

The 2s. duty on corn will have a good effect, but what wants to be taxed is meat, and on no account to let in the foreign cattle. Many farmers find it difficult to pay rent and taxes in Ireland, and it is all owing to the fluctuations in the price of stock, whereas if cattle was worth 50s. a cwt. always people would know how to buy stores, but it is a big jump from 27s. to 50s. per cwt. The duty on corn will assist in a small way, but Mr. Chamberlain ought to think of the meat producer first, as it will affect Ireland much more than the duty on corn.

J. CALDWELL, MEENAHONEY, CASTLEFIN, DONEGAL; Farmer.

As I calculate that 5 qrs. of wheat would be an average produce per acre, therefore, with the small percentage raised, and so few growing any (not 1 in every 50), and also having to pay a little more for flour, I think the benefit from this would be very little generally. But for oats, there being a large quantity grown by everyone engaged in agriculture, I consider there would be a substantial benefit, and it would give a good stimulus to the farmer.

D. M. RATTRAY, BALLYBUNION, KERRY, IRELAND; Farmer.

I would expect the duty would help to raise the price of home-grown corn. It would give more employment in the milling trade, bran, pollard, &c., would be more plentiful, of better quality, and would help to encourage farmers to till more land.

WM. PAGAN, Land Steward to the RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DROGHEDA, MOORE ABBEY, MONASTEREVAN, KILDARE.

My opinion is that if 2s. per quarter were imposed the farmer would benefit from 15s. to £1 per acre.

A. MCCRADKEN, BALLYMAGOLLAND, DERRY; Farmer.

A duty is absolutely necessary if agriculture is to live at all in this country. The foreigner is every day coming nearer our door, and pressing his produce more and more into our markets, while labour is every year getting dearer and scarcer.

R. EVAN DAVIES, WHITEGATE, CO. CLARE; Farmer.

If the above became law I should at once have recourse to tillage, for it would pay, and land would be of greater value. Home-grown cereals could be ground and used more than at present for home use.

E. P. LEACOCK, BEWDLEY, WORCS.; Farmer.

There is no question that the registration duty, which was repealed by Mr. Ritchie, was beneficial to the farmers, and I am perfectly sure that in no case did it weigh injuriously on the working man. I believe a 2s. per quarter duty on corn, except maize, with a corresponding duty on flour, giving a substantial preference to the miller, Colonial corn being admitted free, would be of assistance and benefit to the agricultural industry. My experience is that flour made from English or Irish wheat does not produce so good an article for bakers' use as does a mixture of Duluth and Manitoba, but makes a nice article for housekeepers' use. Before foreign wheats were imported freely, and when mill-stones were used, the native grain had to be stored with a view to giving it age and hardness, and whenever the farmers did not keep the corn under shed a miller or merchant had to store the native grain with a view to giving it age. The more water the flour absorbs the more profit it is to the baker. From what I can gather, the term "strength" is to be taken as meaning the amount of water which the flour will absorb, and it is on this basis that the value of the flour is determined. A 4-bushel bag ground entirely from English wheat will, I am told, give 72 four-pound loaves. A mixture of wheat, one-third English and two-thirds Northern or American, will produce 74 to 75 loaves, while American wheat ground into flour will produce 78 loaves, and even in some cases 80. You will therefore note the very large percentage of water which is able to be put into foreign flour.

An increase in the price of agricultural products, under Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, would be so slight as hardly to enable the farmer to increase the wages of the labourer whose work would be in demand. The labourer would, however, be benefited by small holdings, and he knows it. If any duty is placed on foodstuffs in order to meet the views of the Colonies, the money raised thereby should be paid to a fund for the purpose of procuring:—

(1) Small holdings in agricultural districts.

(2) Facilities for town workmen to build or purchase houses on good terms and at very low interest.

1554

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1556

This would give the labourer a direct interest in the question of Tariff Reform. His position requires far more consideration than that of the landowner, whose property is increased in value by national prosperity, and the farmer who while he will not so largely benefit as the manufacturer, will nevertheless receive a considerable indirect benefit.

J. G. BATEMAN, CAMP, KERRY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

In my opinion a duty on wheat and flour would cause agriculturists to grow more corn, an item amongst farmers which is completely dead, notwithstanding most land in my district is adapted for wheat growing to some extent. Such a duty would make farmers more dependent on themselves, growing and using more of their own produce.

R. HUTCHINSON, KELLS, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I believe the duty on foreign corn would help to increase its growth here and in England, giving more employment and a greater circulation of money, which would benefit the producer of meat, as well as everyone else. This was a large wheat-producing district 40 years ago. Within a distance of 5 miles, on a small river, there were 7 mills grinding wheat flour, which was chiefly sent to England and Scotland. All the wheat was produced in the locality. 4 of those mills are now in ruins ; 3 of them do a little as grist mills, grinding Indian corn and oats for cattle and pigs, and a little wheat and oats for farmers. In addition, we had 11 or 12 small grist mills, grinding Indian corn and oats chiefly for human food ; only 2 of them are now working.

E. FENNESSY, KILKENNY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr. on imported corn would raise the price of home-grown corn about 1s. per barrel, which would greatly increase the corn grown in this country. A duty on maize would be a serious loss to me. I am in favour of a duty on flour.

T. W. WEBBER, KELLYVILLE, ATHY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

I think a duty of 1s. per barrel on imported barley would assure the farmer getting 16s. for his barley instead of 10s. to 14s. 9d. now only sometimes realised. This would amount to a good lot on the yearly farm receipts, and encourage the farmer to sow double the area. He could also grow wheat at a profit, now impossible, and give his land a change of crop. Within my recollection large areas of splendid wheat were grown all over this country (about 1845), and land having had so long a rest is fit to grow wheat again. Barley and oats have been too often grown. I approve highly of slightly protecting the crops which can be grown at home, but maize cannot, and it should be free, as it is largely used for feeding cattle, sheep and pigs in Ireland. I think cotton seed and linseed should also come in free. I approve highly of taxing flour ground abroad at a substantial figure—1st, because the food of the people is deleteriously affected by the use of white flour, which contains no nourishment for the muscle or bone, only starch or fat ; 2nd, I approve of the offal of flour, which is really the most important part, being produced and kept in the country ; 3rd, it must be for the benefit of home industries to reopen the numerous corn mills now closed. The water power in Ireland is now running mostly to waste, and the population (from the effect of free trade) rushing to America, where industries are all protected. Free traders point to the prosperity of England under free trade, but what about Ireland, with its population halved since free trade ?

D. R. O'BRIEN, 16, UPPER MALLOW STREET, LIMERICK ; Land Agent.

Any duty which would tend to raise the price of corn would be of advantage, and would bring into cultivation land at present pasture. Maize being principally used for fattening stock, it would be advantageous to have it imported free.

J. B. ALEXANDER, MOATFIELD HOUSE, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The duty would be a great advantage. It would sprinkle mills through the country, increase the supply of offal, both of which would stimulate industry, and the output of fat animals. It would also tend to steady prices of corn, and the duty paid by the foreigner would relieve the taxes, and if prices were fairly steady, I think we would produce more.

T. M. BARKER, COOLBOY HOUSE, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

It would be a great benefit to any farmer who had corn to sell ; he might realize a higher price for the produce of his farm. With regard to the duty on flour, it does not matter so much, as a few bags of flour will be sufficient for any one family throughout the whole year.

W. S. WATMAN, MERLIN PARK, GALWAY ; Farmer.

I see great advantage to all corn-producing men, in having a level price. It now fluctuates, some years oats fetching 6½d. a stone and some years 9d., the former price not paying the production.

J. O'REGAN, MIDLETON, CORK ; Farmer.

The duty on corn must on the face of it be an advantage to anyone growing oats, as it cannot be grown at present prices, viz. : 8s. 3d. per barrel. If corn was dearer, I would certainly till more land and could give more employment.

ELIZABETH COONEY, KILLADUFF, AUGHRIM ; Farmer.

The duty would enable me to put a larger amount of land into cultivation, and by growing a larger quantity, to market some, and thus have a return in cost for the direct produce of my land. The duty on flour would not affect me directly, as we have no wheat-growing land, nor would it affect me adversely, as the amount is too small to have any effect in the price of our imported flour or the bread of which it is composed.

**1561 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour.**

Beneficial
—continued.

D. E. BYRD, SEURSTOW HALL, TARPORLEY, CHESHIRE ; Farmer.

I am decidedly in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposed duty on corn, although it is no benefit to the agriculturist. About £900 a year is spent in corn, cake, and manure for this farm. If all corn were taxed except whole wheat, we should have a more plentiful supply of offals at a reasonable price, increase of British milling industry, and last, but not least, a cheap loaf for the widow.

W. MARRIAGE, DILBRIDGE HALL, COLOCHESTER, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The proposals would undoubtedly be of assistance to the farmer, especially in the corn-growing districts. The position of the arable farmer would be better if facilities were given to acquire the freehold, as in Ireland, thus enabling him to improve the soil, &c., without fear of losing the result of his expenditure.

H. J. OLIVER MAINE, TEBBYDREMOND, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

By the imposition of a duty on corn we would expect a better price for our produce, which is much needed. The farms in this locality are turning into grass or sub-letting, as a great many farmers are not able to pay the labourer, rent and taxes.

E. G. ARMSTRONG, J.P., F.S.I., B.A., T.C.D., BALLINASLOE, GALWAY ; Land Agent.

I have for many years thought a duty on corn vitally necessary for Great Britain and Ireland, also a duty on flour would keep the mills working. These mills produce a better flour or meal for food than fine foreign flour, with most of the best feeding qualities removed by modern machinery. The grinding of imported corn would leave all the offal in this country to feed cattle and sheep cheaply. The same remarks apply to cakes and feeding stuffs generally.

F. H. S. O'BRIEN, CRATLOE WOODS, CRATLOE, CLARE ; Farmer.

The benefit of the suggested duties on corn and flour would tend to keep prices of all produce steadier than they are at present, which, I take it, is the most desirable thing that can result from an agricultural point of view.

D. MACKINTOSH, DUNAMAISE, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

It is right to have maize free. It is a good and cheap feeding stuff, and being largely used in this country gives a lot of milling work. The small duty on corn may give some relief to tillage farmers, and later may make more work in the country, when it will pay farmers to grow corn for marketing.

F. E. & J. TAYLOR, HERMITAGE, NEWBURY, BERKS. ; Farmers.

The 2s. duty on corn would of course be better than nothing—it is really barely a market due—but why should foreign producers be permitted to participate in the advantages of our markets without contributing in some way to the expenses ? As we cannot produce maize, linseed and cotton-seed, by all means admit them free—but the last two only in an unmanufactured state.

J. T. CAMEBON, STRUAN, ISLE OF SKYE, N.B. ; Farmer.

As regards the sheep farming industry, we use a considerable quantity of maize and other feeding stuffs, such as oil-cakes and locust beans. A duty on corn would not benefit the sheep-farming industry, though it would benefit the arable farming industry. Having an interest in an arable farm, I consider the 2s. per qr. duty on corn would be of great advantage to arable farming.

S. E. DEAN & SONS, DOWSBY HALL, BOURNE, LINCOLN ; Farmers.

If a duty were raised on corn it would indirectly relieve the farmer of some of the taxes he has to pay on home-grown food. The duty on wheat would not enhance the price. The only benefit would be, that it would increase the revenue. This applies to all other grain, except barley, which we think might slightly rise in price. We certainly think maize should have a duty on it as well as other corns.

T. LATHAM, BISHOP'S COURT, DORCHESTER, OXFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

These duties will be beneficial to the whole of the agricultural community. I hold very strong views that they will be tolls on our markets, making a considerable amount to lessen this heavily-taxed country and will not add a penny to the cost to the consumer. I cannot think why maize is exempted.

FORM No. 12,617. Farmer.

A duty such as proposed would assist us in cultivating more grain crops, while at the same time it would give us maize at a price which we could feed it profitably to stock.

M. G. E. HAYDEN, CARRICK-ON-SUIB, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

The duty would be the greatest advantage to me, especially getting the maize free, as I use a quantity of it in feeding cattle.

A. PULLING, BEDDINGTON, NEAR CROYDON ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn, if it raised the selling price of wheat here, would diminish the loss of growing that crop. Wheat I grow for the sake of the straw, and because autumn-sown crops are more certain than spring-sown on my land. If a duty on flour increased the supply of fresh bran, and lowered the price of this article, it would be a benefit, as it is useful food for stock at a proper price. The admission of Colonial corn free is the weak part of the scheme. I do not believe in giving preference to relations in matters of trade. The tenant farmers in the neighbourhood can only make a living by sale of milk, hay and straw—this impoverishes the land, and unless they can make a profit from sale of fat beasts and corn the state of the land must deteriorate. To keep up its condition, straw is required to form bulky manure—fattening cattle to give the manure good manurial value, and to improve the pastures—and a great proportion of the hay or grass grown should be fed on the farms.

1562

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1564

FORM No. 12,357. Farmer.

The fiscal change proposed by Mr. Chamberlain I feel certain is right in regard to securing our just rights in our foreign trade. Our strength lay in getting cheap food to enable our artisans to produce articles required in the different parts of the world at a cheaper rate than a protected country could produce them. What is the result? Foreigners take all these advantages from us by simply putting a tax on British-made articles. In the name of common sense why should we not retaliate and tax all those that tax the British manufactured goods? With regard to Mr. Chamberlain's idea of putting 2s. a qr. on foreign corn, as a farmer of 50 years' experience, I predict that if this change on those terms takes place, we shall see wheat cheaper than it has ever been before. No farmer can change his course of cropping (if he has a system) under 3 or 4 years, and the Colonies in that time would double their supply of wheat to this country. I believe in Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy, because it will revive the trade of this country and by that means lead to the prosperity of agriculture and put the mother-country in closer fellowship with the valuable Colonial possessions, which we at this time hardly appreciate the value of.

A. E. PAYNE, WALFORD MANOR, BASCHURCH, SHREWSBURY; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would probably benefit me provided (a) the price of corn was not unduly raised, and (b) the price of maize relatively to wheat, and other home-grown grains, were kept relatively low. As regards (a) the increased supply of wheat from our Colonies admitted free would probably more than make up the decreasing supplies from other countries, and so the price of wheat might even become lower. Owing to preference to the miller, offals would become cheaper, which would be the greatest boon. At present they are relatively too dear. As regards (b), maize is the most largely used article for feeding purposes of all kinds of animals, consequently, it regulates to a great extent the prices of cakes and all other feeding stuffs. These articles must be reasonably low in price, which they can only be if maize is low in price. There should be, in the interest of the farmer, a good margin between maize and home-grown grain, in favour of maize as the cheaper food. Even if wheat became dearer, provided this margin was preserved, I should not object. Probably I should again grow wheat and oats, and exchange for maize, thereby regaining the advantage of growing my own straw, and employing more labour, which have both been reluctantly given up. The State should establish a National Wheat Bank in connection with the Bank of England, with branches in different parts of Great Britain, where there should be large national granaries, the only method of providing a reserve in time of war. Instead of increasing the reserved gold, which many financiers have been urging on account of the present reserve being inadequate, substitute for it a reserve of wheat, to be paid for by notes, issued on the credit of the wheat in store. In case of war, the largest demand on the gold reserve would probably now be for the purchase of wheat, but if this was already there, this would be avoided, and a national scare, with a great advance in price of wheat, would be averted. The Government would have the control of the price of wheat not only at such a crisis, but also in times of peace. This would be effected very much in the same way as the price of money is now regulated by the fixing of the Bank rate. Steadiness in the price of corn following from this would be of the greatest assistance to agriculture, and would form a solid and enduring basis on which it would rest. Agricultural land—*qua* agricultural apart from building or other value—capable of producing so much wheat, worth so much gold, would become of the nature of Consols, producing so much interest in gold. Any surplus over this, caused by an enhanced price for corn in time of war, the Government could justly appropriate by a tax at such a time to help to pay for such a war, in consideration of their having established a price for corn at which it could be profitably sold at all times. According to the Report of the Royal Commission on our food supply in time of war, the greatest, if not the most insuperable objection to national granaries—otherwise favourably reported on—was the financial difficulty. It was thought the above suggestion would meet this difficulty to a great extent.

B. B. SAPWELL, SANKENCE, AYLISHAM, NORFOLK; Farmer.

The 2s. duty on corn—as Colonial would come in free—would not make British corn much dearer, but a preference to the miller would make much difference to British agriculture. Our offals would be much cheaper, and cake and other feeding stuffs would come cheaper in proportion. Why not put a substantial duty on foreign malting barley—taking off a corresponding duty on the beer—this would hurt no one, but would enormously benefit agriculture.

R. S. GIBB, LAUDER, N.B.; Farmer.

2s. per qr. duty might be expected to somewhat lessen the import of sulphured and shelly inferior oats from Northern Europe—and to that extent would enhance the price of oats as a food for town draught horses—in so far at least as the duty-free maize did not interfere with this. Wheat it would seem can be supplied better and cheaper by the Colonies—oats and barley cannot. The by-products of millers, brewers, distillers, are better feeding than maize. The proposed preference to millers would tend to increase and cheapen the then supply. Foreign barley would still be used when the quality was interfered with by untoward seasons, but on an average year I would consider the price generally might tend to rise. On this farm which is not specially devoted to grain growing the advantage might be expected reasonably to amount to £20 per annum. I think the exemption of maize a mistake.

F. GITTS, WEST ROW, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

The proposed duty will not materially affect the price of corn, but it will benefit by reducing the price of offals and of cake. Maize for other than feeding purposes, such as brewing, distilling and flour making, should be subject to the same duty as other corn imported for similar uses.

C. S. WOLTON, IKWORTH, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

I don't expect the benefit to be great, but I should gratefully accept it. Of the 2s. per qr. proposed duty, I imagine not more than 1s. would come into the hands of the farmers, who would have to divide it into 3 equal

parts, the landlord, the tenant, and the labourers each getting their share. I am glad an extra amount of duty is to be placed upon foreign flour. I strongly advocate an extra duty on foreign malting barley. The price of barley has greatly depreciated while the price of beer remains the same, therefore the large majority of consumers of beer would not be affected by it.

A. BUTTERWORTH, HATHERDEN, NEAR ANDOVER; Farmer.

It would be beneficial both to this country and our Colonies to impose a tax of 2s. per qr. on corn, &c., although in 1902 when the 2s. per qr. tax was charged, my wheat was sold at a lower price than the two previous years as shown in the following particulars:—

Year.	Total acreage grown by me in wheat.	Total quantity of sacks grown by me of wheat.	Average sacks grown per acre.	Average price my wheat sold at per sack.
1900	96½	714	7·38	14-7½
1901	113½	935	8·24	14-8½
1902	158	1,452	9·36	14-3½

A. ALLEN, CARRICKBOY, EDGEWORTHSTOWN, CO. LONGFORD; Farmer.

As mine is chiefly a grass farm I could not say if the proposed duty would be of much benefit to me, since I buy a considerable quantity of oats every year. However, it might induce me to sow more oats and be a benefit to me in that way.

S. LAVERACK, HADDLESLEY MANOR, SELBY, YORKS.; Farmer.

By placing a duty on flour we should get more offals made here for consumption of cattle; now they are the same price as wheat.

J. CROCKETT, DRUMNASHIRE, LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

Oats are the principal grain crop in Ulster and any change that would tend to increase and steady the price, even a very little, would assist us, but it is Canadian oatmeal that keeps down the price of our oats.

WALTER J. HENMAN, MOULSFORD, WALLINGFORD, BERKS.

It would benefit practically to the extent of the duty. There should be a heavy protective duty on wheat flour. Young stock cannot be reared without the offals of wheat. I have farmed for 30 years (when wheat was double the price) and because it was ground here the offals were often two-thirds or nearly half the present price. Cheap wheat offals would be a great boon to all farmers. Owing to the importation of wheat flour, within recent years, the farmer has had to pay as much for bran as he made on his wheat.

G. T. JAMES, ESTATE OFFICE, HAMPDEN HOUSE, GREAT MISSENDEN; Farmer.

The proposed duty of 2s. per qr. on corn would not, I suppose, raise the price a great deal—I mean it would hardly bring home to the grower 2s. extra beyond the present market price. But, certainly, it would not lower the price, and therefore must be to advantage of the English grower. It would, I think, be of assistance to the course of farming which I am trying to carry out. Besides which, one would hope that the proposed duty would bring in a considerable revenue, and money being plentiful, perhaps the Government may see its way to relieve the land of some of the burdens which are carried by the tenant, such as district road rates and poor rates.

A. J. MCINTOSH, BORELAND, CARLAVEROCK, DUMFRIES; Farmer.

It would not be felt directly, but the duty would be an indirect benefit in causing the foreigner to pay for the use of the British market, which the home producer has to do in the shape of local and imperial taxation.

J. DAVIES, KILLOUGH FARM, NEAR ABERGAVENNY, MONMOUTH; Farmer.

I should consider it a great advantage for the corn grower in England—duty upon wheat in particular—because of the labour in the manufacturing, and the offals for stock feeding. There should be a duty upon barley, or else it will go out of cultivation on all cold land.

J. STRATTON, CHILCOMBE, WINCHESTER; Farmer.

I think the proposed scheme would be of very slight benefit to the British farmer but of great benefit to our Empire.

S. MADDOCKS, HADLEY, WHITCHURCH, SALOP; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's policy is sound and good upon the whole, and well meant to benefit trade and agriculture generally. I have always been a working man. I started in a small way and have always done better when I have had to pay big wages and trade was good. It is better for a man to pay a trifle more for a few of his articles and have good money to buy them with, than to have less money and goods a little cheaper.

W. R. DIXON, CAMBRIDGE FARM, LYNSTED, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's idea is right, a 2s. duty will hurt no one and will help the Exchequer. It might raise the price paid for 2 or 3 months but supply and demand would soon put that straight. Although I use a lot of maize, I should not object to a 2s. duty on that too. I think a 5s. duty per cwt. on foreign hops would do a deal of good for the whole country, it would cause a lot more acres to be planted in England, therefore much more money spent in labour, and after the first 2 years the price would not be raised to the brewer, but in very cheap seasons it might help the English grower a little.

R. WRIGHT, PRUMPLESTOWN HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

It would be helpful, inasmuch as it would encourage milling and so give more employment, and would give more offal for cattle feeding, and indirectly in other ways.

H. C. VILLIERS-STUART, CAPPOQUIN, WATERFORD ; Farmer.

This duty would not materially increase the area of corn grown, but it would most decidedly have a steadying effect, and the knowledge that the area of competition was circumscribed would give farmers a feeling of confidence that would be most valuable and encouraging. The climate of the south of Ireland is against wheat growing on a large scale. But if farmers could feel a sense of security in the future, tillage might return to its former position, oats and barley taking the place of wheat. The proposed duty on flour would certainly help very much to revive local milling.

H. S. WARREN SMITH, WALER HOUSE, BLETHINGLEY, SURREY ; Farmer.

No doubt the price of wheat would be better to the home seller by this amount, and it might help to encourage its production ; more milling offals would be cheaper and this would much help to encourage a larger head of stock being kept.

HUGH BLACKBURN, ANNAT, CORPACH, ARGYLL ; Farmer.

It would make little direct difference to me as my corn crop is consumed on the farm, except that the home supply of corn offals would be increased and therefore probably be cheapened. Indirectly the help given by this to the arable farmer, who is also a feeder, would probably benefit me as a breeder.

E. W. BETTS, BABINGLEY, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn may be of small benefit to farmers in the near future, but the wheat produce of America and Russia cannot afford to lose the British market. They must therefore still compete with Canada, Australia and India, hence the price of wheat in Great Britain will be little affected. The pleasing feature in the proposal is the duty on imported flour. This will greatly benefit the milling industry besides lowering the price of the offals to farmers. Wheat at the present moment is fetching 9d. per stone at mills, bran 7d. at mills or market towns. If maize is admitted duty free, it will enter very severely into competition with the lower qualities of English barleys and also oats for feeding.

COL. D. J. MANSEERGH, J.P., GRALLAGH CASTLE, THURLES, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

It would be a small advantage, amounting to about 1s. a barrel on all oats and barley sold. I grow no wheat ; it would not affect the beef much ; feeding stuffs might be a little cheaper, which would not affect me much as I use up all of the small corn for that purpose.

WALTER MANFIELD, WOOTH GRANGE, BRIDPORT ; Farmer.

It would not increase the acreage I have at present under wheat, because I have to provide keep for a large flock of sheep, even if wheat went up in price permanently as a result of Mr. Chamberlain's duty. But, naturally, since my land grows very good crops of wheat I would benefit by an increased price.

LT.-COL. F. HEARD, J.P., LEHENA HOUSE, CORK ; AND CAMIRA, NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

If the offal of mills was at my disposal and milling carried out to any extent it would benefit me and all surrounding farmer.

W. P. HANLY, THURLES, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

It would suit me best to buy cheap corn to feed my stock, but in the interest of the small farmer and to help the milling industry and increase the population and keep the people from emigrating, I would strongly recommend a small duty with Colonial preference.

S. P. GRAVES, SOUTHAM, RUGBY ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would be of little advantage personally, but an advantage to arable farms as they would undoubtedly get more for their produce, especially the offals, which are better than foreign stuffs, pollard, etc.

FORM NO. 12,050. Farmer.

In view of the large increase in the area of Colonial wheat I cannot see that the proposed duty on wheat is likely to directly benefit the farmer in this country. But as it could be imposed without affecting the consumer to any appreciable extent, and would increase the revenue, I think it would be a step in the right direction. I think that the duty on flour would benefit the farmer as well as the miller, since milling offals for stock feeding would be more plentiful if the corn were ground in this country.

R. STRATTON, THE DUFFRYN, NEWPORT, MON. ; Farmer.

The proposal is a fair one as to the relative interests of stock and corn farming. It is a great question whether it would affect prices to any appreciable extent. Looked at from a national point of view, it would produce a large revenue without injuring anyone.

J. ELLIOT, MEIGLE, GALASHIELS, SELKIRK ; Farmer.

Such a duty by raising revenue will benefit us indirectly. It might give us confidence that a further ruinous drop in prices would not be allowed. Otherwise it could not affect us materially.

1573

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FREDERIC SMITH, LODDINGTON, MAIDSTONE ; Farmer.

The duty on corn would be of no advantage to me directly, but indirectly it would be, by having a tendency to check the over-planting of fruit and by helping the corn grower. The duty on flour would be a great help to both miller and farmer.

W. YOUNG, D.L., BROCKLEY PARK, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr. on wheat, barley and oats, would assist the farmer as regards the latter two grains, but would have no effect in restoring the growth of wheat in Ireland. A duty on flour would assist more milling at home, and indirectly help farmers to enlarge the supply of bran, pollard, &c., for pig and cattle feeding.

E. SNELL, NETTLESTEAD HALL, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal is, I am aware, only a small one, still I should like to see it tried. It can only be fair that the foreigner who now makes use of the British market should contribute something to revenue for that use. I do the same as a trader. Because I make use of the British market I have to pay my portion of stall burdens ; why should not the foreigner, making use of that same market, contribute to stall outgoings ? If not, I had better clear out at home and go to the same producing source where I can gather and sell my produce free from all burdens which I have to pay at home, while the foreigner escapes altogether. A small duty will never add much to the price of corn, the least inflation would directly increase the producing area immensely. Still, a little duty would doubtless harden things somewhat and make prices a little stiffer and give a certain amount as revenue. A small duty on flour would do more good than anything and create a vast amount of milling industry, which under present arrangements is entirely lost to this country.

J. BEECROFT, BANKFIELDS, EASTHAM, NEAR BIRKENHEAD, CHESHIRE ; Farmer.

A duty will be of great assistance, as it will give us more offal for our stocks, encourage the working of our own mills with a better price for corn, and be of much benefit to agriculturists. Generally, many more things than the above require a duty to be put on, for undoubtedly foreign competition is one of the greatest drawbacks to British agriculture being prosperous.

F. R. DANIELL, OAKHAM, RUTLAND ; Farmer.

The proposed duty on corn and flour would be beneficial principally by increasing the revenue and thereby lowering internal taxation. For 2s. per qr. on only a portion of our imports would have to be paid entirely by the foreign grower, as our Colonies and home-grown produce would compete in the duty-paid market at a level price ; 10s. per qr. would stimulate home wheat growing and might raise the price 5s., or $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per loaf, while our extra production would reduce our foreign bread bill to the tune of our own extra growth.

R. CARR, GRINDON, NORHAM-ON-TWEED, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

Most practical farmers think that though we will not reap much direct profit from a 2s. per qr. duty on corn, seeing the price would scarcely be affected at all thereby to the consumer ; yet indirectly in feeding stuffs and the lessening of taxation, it would help us greatly by giving us just the smallest profit in the British markets. So we strongly support the proposal and condemn the withdrawal of the late 1s. duty.

E. HAYDEN, CASTLEREA LODGE, MAGENY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I do not know exactly that in my special case a tax will produce a great benefit or any benefit. But I do think that a well balanced and carefully considered duty as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, should in the long run be an untold benefit to Great Britain and Ireland, as it might stimulate the growing of cereals so that we might not rely so much on the foreigner for our bread. If the above duty increased my price by 1s. per barrel, I would benefit about £25 in the year.

A. BIRNIE, WELLHOUSE, BEAULY, INVERNESS-SHIRE ; Farmer.

A small duty of 2s. per qr. on corn would not raise the price of our grain to any extent—at most 6d. per qr.—because the Colonies already send a good proportion of the imported grain, and I expect they will soon be in a position to send all we want. I am quite for Mr. Chamberlain's proposal all the same, for the sake of binding the Colonies and the Mother country still closer together, so that in any emergency we would be independent of the rest of the world as to our food supplies.

R. GOODE NORMAN, THE MANOR FARM, RUFFORD ABBEY, OLLERTON, NOTTS. ; Farmer.

I don't think a duty of 2s. per qr. on corn will benefit the British farmer in raising the price of his corn. When the foreigner has his corn to spare it must come, duty or no duty. The benefit will be to the country by making the foreigner pay some of the taxes for the use of the English market. The duty on flour will benefit, by bringing more bran and fourths nearer home for the farmer's use, as well as being the means of grinding at home and employing some thousands of millers, earning good wages which will be spent at home, and some of it will get into the farmer's pocket for his produce. In my opinion, a 4s. or 5s. duty on all foreign malting barley would increase the revenue very much, without taxing the people's food. Brewers would, of course, object, as they did to the Pure Beer Bill. Now they see, or may see, they have lost the confidence of the public and driven them to whisky, with the result of nearly all large brewing firms complaining of trade falling off and people not so strong. The Government at that time might, and ought, to have tried to do some good to the British farmer by carrying a Pure Beer Bill, and had it made from nothing but malt and hops.

G. P. TERRETT, MEAT INSPECTOR'S OFFICE, CENTRAL MARKETS, SMITHFIELD, LONDON, E.C.

That something should be done to raise the price of corn is obvious. The production of wheat and barley is the keystone of the agricultural position. The lowest price at which these can be produced is 5s. and 4s. per bushel respectively. If this could be ensured, the farmer, to keep up the fertility of his corn land,

would be compelled to turn out more meat, which at the average price of the last 12 months he could very well do. Flour should be subjected to a higher proportionate duty than wheat, as domination by the foreigner has dealt the agricultural districts serious injury by bringing about the cessation of the milling industry.

C. D. WARNOCK, FINTONA, TYRONE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

All foreign produce should be fairly and honestly taxed, except maize and wheat, so as to prevent the foreigners from robbing this country of its choicest young men and young women. It would allow me a better income from the land, leave the land to be much better cultivated and enriched, and until some such laws come into force, the land of this country must deteriorate.

W. GUILD, J.P., PARKHILL, NEWBURGH, FIFE ; Farmer.

One of the best points about this proposal is that we would get a much better supply of bran, which sometimes is nearly as dear per ton as wheat.

J. PORTERFIELD, LETTERKENNY, DONEGAL, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The tax would advance our oats in price 1d. per stone of 14 lbs. There are 24 stones in the quarter of oats and it would enable the English farmer to grow wheat instead of oats, while we should have in Ireland a demand for oats when English farmers would grow wheat.

M. HALLORAN, LISTOWEL, CO. KERRY ; Farmer.

Agriculture, the only and chief industry we have here in Ireland, has been languishing and growing worse (with the exception of the Northern Province) for the last 20 years. Oats, barley and wheat, were very remunerative crops, and, moreover, were regarded by agriculturists as a powerful auxiliary at the end of the season to pay the high rents demanded with rigid exactitude. I have grown oats extensively for the last few years, but have been obliged to give it up, owing to bad prices and cost of production—8½d. a stone was the best I could get. I have no doubt that some form of protective duty based on the lines indicated in this question would be of immense benefit to this poor country, would stimulate and encourage farmers to break up and cultivate land that rarely needs improvement, and the working classes, who are every year leaving for America in thousands may probably be tempted to remain at home if they see signs of life and activity among agriculturists and a chance of constant employment.

J. KAVANAGH, BALLINGLEN, RATHDEUM, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

A duty on corn of 2s. will hardly alter the price, but with the stimulus it will give to millers in converting the raw article into flour and other stuffs, and the employment it will give, will be worth as much to the farmer as the duty itself, and, taking everything into account, it would, I believe, be of considerable assistance.

R. H. NORMAN, BOX FARM, NEWNHAM-ON-SEVERN ; Farmer.

None whatever directly. I consume on my farm much more corn than I grow, so I should have to pay more for the corn I buy. But I believe the duty proposed by Mr. Chamberlain would greatly benefit the country generally. It would enable farmers to pay higher wages, and so keep a better class of labourers on the land. This, in my opinion, is the only solution to the difficulty. Again, I think it a shame and disgrace to so thickly a populated country that so many thousands of acres of land should practically go out of cultivation because the price of corn is so low it will not pay to grow it. Indirectly some of the money may return to me in other ways. If the labourer has bigger wages he may pay a bigger price for his milk, &c., &c.

H. D'ESTERRE, J.P., MELTON MOWBRAY ; Farmer.

The above-mentioned duty would go far to enable farmers to break up a reasonable proportion of land, producing food and giving employment. There is little or no tillage in my neighbourhood in Ireland or Melton Mowbray either, what there is being exclusively for consumption by the farm stock.

G. COPE, RATHVILLY, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

If the tax increased the price of oats by 1s. per barrel it would mean £15 or more each year to me.

J. GORDON, CULLISSE, NIGG STATION, ROSS-SHIRE ; Farmer.

Such a scheme would employ more hands in the milling industry. These, with their families, would require to be fed with agricultural produce, and in this way the farmer would be benefited. Apart from this, it would make Great Britain a Greater Britain. The 2s. collected from foreign corn would not raise grain ½d. per qr. The Government would thereby benefit to the extent of £3,000,000 sterling, drawn from the foreigners' pocket, and to that extent it would save the British taxpayer.

A. W. RUGGLES-BRISE, BRAINTREE, ESSEX ; Farmer.

2s. per qr. on wheat and corn would not, I think, enhance the value of our corn. For the first few weeks probably speculation would cause a fluctuation, though any sum up to 5s. would not permanently affect the price, owing to the fact that supply and demand entirely control price, and apparently all surplus stocks come into this country. I sold wheat at 27s. 6d., the duty of 1s. was put on, 3 weeks afterwards I sold the same for 26s. 6d. A duty on flour would, I think, help the milling trade, and indirectly help the farmer by a larger production of offal in this country, such as bran, middlings, pollard. For our Eastern counties wheat was the paying crop, and would be now, and a good price for wheat alone can make our arable land show a good profit. If there was no political cry of "big and little loaf" wheat might be taxed as easily as tea. Very little of our home-grown corn goes to London. The proposal would (1) help to pay our taxes ; (2) would certainly not depreciate the value of our cereals.

J. MARR, UPFER MILLS, TARVES, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

The proposed duty on corn is too small to influence the price. The foreigner would get so much less, and send his grain here all the same. Colonial production would be stimulated, and prices would be kept down by increased Colonial imports, unless they were made subject to a modified duty. But the revenue would gain, therefore agriculturists would share in that benefit. They would also have a very considerable advantage from the correspondingly higher duty on flour, because bran and wheat offals would be cheaper and more abundant.

A. J. SMITH, RENDLESHAM, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would be of very little benefit to me, but it is perfectly right, considering the milling interest, and the extra amount of bran, offals, &c., that would be available to the British farmer.

E. G. A. COCHRANE, RED CASTLE, NEAR LONDONDERBY ; Farmer.

No advantage to us here would follow a duty on corn, except to raise the price of flour and bread, though I personally believe there would be great benefit by a tax on foreign corn, to include wheat, barley, oats. It should raise a little the price for us farmers, and should give our Ministers something to barter with foreign governments. By free trade we have nothing to barter with, and foreign governments can and do tax all our produce going into their markets, while they can swamp our markets with their goods.

S. R. SHERWOOD, IPSWICH ; Farmer.

The 2s. duty on corn would not help us much, as it would put up the price of foreign feeding peas, lentils, etc., but a heavy duty on imported flour would help a good deal, and hurt no one in England. It would resuscitate the milling business in country districts, and make all wheat offals cheaper to the farmer, which would be a great boon.

MAJOR-GEN. H. E. WHITE, J.P., D.L., LOUGH ESKE CASTLE, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

These small duties will scarcely improve the selling price of home-grown corn. The advantage to the miller, if sufficient, should give more bran for home consumption—a very great benefit to the farmer if realised.

R. FOOTMAN, HAFODWEN, CARMARTHEN ; Farmer.

I do not see how it would affect us much, but it would be some benefit if all wheat came here unground. We could then get a better class of bran than at present and cheaper, and could keep our country mills going, instead, as at present, of being almost all idle.

J. WALKER, CARLOW, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

Unless a tax is put on foreign produce, the farmer in this country will not be able to live. 25 years ago when I was paying £2 per acre for my land I had a much larger margin profit than now, when it is only about £1 per acre.

G. MARTIN, BUDOCK LODGE, AMBLESIDE AVENUE, STREATHAM, SURREY ; Farmer.

The 2s. per qr. duty on wheat will make scarcely any difference to the producer, excepting that we shall be in a position to purchase milling offals for our stock at a less price than at present. Their present price is nearly as much as wheat. The duty on wheat would help the miller in his business, and make him a better customer for English wheat. The duty of 2s. per qr. on barley, oats, beans, &c., would help the farmer more.

A. ROBB, DUNDONALD, BELFAST ; Farmer.

The impetus given to colonial production by the proposed duty, would, in a very short time, result in grain being as cheap or possibly cheaper than it is at present. I would not anticipate any direct benefit from the proposed change. Indirectly, however, I think it would be of very great assistance, as our colonists would be able to buy more manufactured productions, more labour would be employed, better wages paid to artisans, who are our largest consumers, and consequently we would receive better prices for the off-products of our farms, such as milk, butter, eggs, and vegetables. The preference given to the miller would result in our obtaining bran, shorts, &c., at much more reasonable prices.

A. MISKIN, CHART SUTTON, KENT ; Farmer.

The above proposal might slightly increase the price of corn. Colonial corn being admitted free would cause more grinding in this country, thus producing a corresponding increase in offals, which would then be put on the market at a lower price than at present, considerably assisting the stock feeder.

W. D. EVERINGTON, CASTLE ACRE, SWAFFHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

The duty on wheat and flour will in a slight degree assist farmers by inducing millers to manufacture more English and Colonial wheat, thereby placing on the market an increased supply of offal which of late years has ranged very high in price in proportion to the raw materials. The duty on foreign barley would help up prices of home-grown corn, but this will depend to a great extent on the seasons, as the quality of malting barley depends very much on sunshine and sufficient rain to fill the kernel; it is also greatly damaged by excessive downfall.

J. R. CRITCHLOW, WESTON-MERE-FARM, MAER, NEWCASTLE, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion if carried out would, I think, help to increase the quantity of offal such as bran, &c., a great advantage, as it would tend to decrease the price. At the same time I do not think it would raise the price of bread when the free imports from our colonies are considered. I always maintain that the duty or toll will be paid by the producer, and not the consumer, after the first, say, 3 months, to give time for the markets to settle down.

FORM No. 12,340. Farmer.

1589

The price of oats used for meal (the best) would not be directly affected, as imported oats, if used at all for that purpose, are only used for mixing in small quantities with home-grown oats. On the other hand, home-grown wheat occupies the same position in the manufacture of flour that foreign oats take in the making of meal; that is, it is mixed with imported wheat to make the flour cheaper, and probably for other reasons, too. Mr. Chamberlain proposes to give the miller a substantial preference, the natural result of which will be to encourage milling in this country; it will very probably create a greater demand for home-grown wheat, to mix with the increased quantity of wheat that would have to be imported.

FORM No. 12,345. Bacon Curers.

In the interests of the grazier, it would be far better to let foreign barley come in free, but to impose the suggested 2s. per qr. duty on other corn, including maize, with a corresponding duty on flour or meal of any kind. Colonial corn, of course, should be admitted free.

WILLIAM LIVINGSTON, NEWTON-OF-MOUNTBLAIRY, BY BANFF, N.B.; Farmer.

I am not prepared to say here to what extent these duties will benefit agriculturists, but I am convinced we would be better, and at any rate we ought to have fair play. The 1s. on the corn last year proved an advantage and was popular, which is best proof of what advantage the 2s. would be.

J. BEHAN, LUGHILL, MONASTEREVAN, KILDARE; Farmer.

1590

As the majority of Irish farmers depend on the barley crop in order to make out the rent, a tax on all foreign barley should improve the present depressing prices of that grain. As Indian meal and corn and flour are largely consumed in this country I think a tax on them would assist to impoverish the country.

J. & S. G. MURTLAND, LIMAVADY, CO. LONDONDERRY; Farmers.

1. I hope it may increase the demand for home produce. 2. It may be the means of starting machinery at home that has been lying idle for a number of years and thereby draw more population to our native country.

O. PRICE, NANTYHEARN CRAY, BRECON; Farmer.

It would assist the farmer to obtain a better price for his corn, so that it would benefit him to cultivate more land, which may have been rendered unprofitable through being allowed to remain out of cultivation for too long a period. Evidently, at present, a large area of the arable land of this country is being laid down to grass, and in the course of time that land gets unproductive. The consequence is a great waste in the fertility of the soil, which could be made to yield better crops of corn and grass if properly managed and cultivated. A reduction in the value of the agricultural land by the diminution of the produce thereof is a loss to the tenants, to the landlords, and the community at large.

GEORGE PETRIE, ELGIN; Farmer.

1591

It would be hard to say, but the duty would have a tendency to steady prices and keep them from fluctuating a great deal. If farmers could depend on fairly good prices for their produce, they would give work to more labourers, and induce them to locate themselves more in the country, knowing that they would get steady work.

J. PIMBLEY, KENSINGTON FARM, MAGHULL, NEAR LIVERPOOL; Farmer.

A duty might improve the price of wheat, and would encourage other farmers to grow more wheat and less roots, thereby becoming less competitive with me, and it would provide more work for those who would need more vegetables from me and others, and then the offal would be very useful for feeding purposes. We grow potatoes very extensively, and they are an expensive crop to grow, and occasionally have to be sold much below cost of production. Sometimes when extremely low here, and very dear in the United States of America, we could with advantage to ourselves have sent them a good deal, only for their high tariff. Whenever potatoes are dear in England we admit foreign potatoes free, so you see we farmers suffer both ways. A duty ought to be put upon all foreign imported potatoes.

T. H. VERGETTE, BORO' FEN, PETERBORO, NOTTS.; Farmer.

I pay about 1s. per qr. in taxes and rates, while foreign corn and flour is carried on the roads, I maintain, without any charge. It is sold free in our markets, while we pay for them.

1592

P. E. MEREDITH, CLARA HILL, MOUNTMELICK, QUEEN'S CO.; Farmer.

Of course, any policy that will tend to raise the present miserable prices of farm produce would be an immense boon, and encourage Irish farmers to till a great deal more than they do at present. With the state of the labour market as it is, the high price of feeding stuffs, manures, &c., and the low prices for produce, farming has become a means of eking out an existence and nothing more.

C. DEVEREUX, WEYBREAD, HARLESTON, NORFOLK; Farmer.

With reference to the duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, this is a big question, but whatever is done we must consider that what we have sent us is the surplus of other countries, of little value to them, as they are sure to keep enough for their own wants before they ship any over to this country, and whatever we charge them in a fair way, the surplus will still come to this country, duty or no duty. This is a national question. It is as much for the interest of one as another. Our land is but little good to cultivate at the present prices; consequently we are letting it lay to grass and sending our money to other countries and diminishing the spending power of our own. The duty suggested by Mr. Chamberlain is no new idea to me, as you will see by my letter I enclose, written in the year 1894, at the time when there were many thousands unemployed. I quite agree that it is the only remedy.

**1593 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Beneficial
—continued.

F. ROBERT JACKSON, KILKEA HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

My views are to let everything come in free of duty that does not clash with our own interests, but to charge a duty on everything that clashes with our own productions or manufactures. I agree with Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy in every particular. Farmers and manufacturers are with him ; tradesmen and labourers are not ; they must be educated to understand it, or else get some inducement to back it up.

E. DUNKLEY, FRANT, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal to put a duty on imported manufactured goods would be of great indirect benefit to the farmer. When wages are good there is a better demand for all the farmer's produce, and consequently a better price. The duty on corn will certainly help to raise the price. The duty on flour, causing more corn to be ground by millers, will make a larger amount of bran and other offals to be put on the market at a lower price, and will be of benefit for feeding, enabling me to produce beef, mutton, milk, &c., at a lower cost. A duty of 10s. per cwt. on foreign hops would be of greater benefit. Hops cost about £30 per acre to cultivate, about $\frac{2}{3}$ of this being spent on labour.

J. F. GREEN, J.P., GREENMOUNT, PATRICK'S WELL, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

So many things, the labour problem, &c., have to be considered that it would not be easy to form an opinion as to what taxation or duty upon corn would make it worth the while of farmers to begin to grow wheat, &c., again on a considerable scale. Most Irish farmers grow wheat to feed their cattle only, and in some cases get it ground at the mill into flour for their own bread-making, especially in Co. Wexford, of which I know something. Labour in Ireland is cheaper than in England, and on that account, a reasonably large duty ought to benefit agriculture in this country. Barley used to be much more grown, and is grown in Wexford, and in this county (Limerick) on a smaller scale, for cattle and pigs, and fowl-feeding. Some of course of the best is sold for malting purposes, but it is not much of an industry.

W. DUNN, REDDEN HALL, KELSÓ, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

If Mr. Chamberlain's policy of putting a 2s. duty on corn were carried out, it would in the course of a few years cheapen grain, for this reason, that a very great impetus would be given to all the Colonies to bring more land into cultivation. It certainly would not raise the price to the consumer, as other countries sending grain to this country would require to compete with the Colonial and home produce. The refuse from flour (bran, &c.) used for feeding purposes would have a tendency to get cheaper, owing to more wheat being imported and manufactured at home. Exempting maize from duty would have the effect of brewers and distillers using more for it than at present.

THOMAS SPEAKMAN, FAULEBORN, WITHAM, ESSEX ; Farmer.

A duty on corn as proposed by Mr. Chamberlain would make a difference of £100 a year in my favour.

J. MILNE, MUCHALLS, STONEHAVEN, N.B. ; Farmer.

I calculate that the benefit I should derive from the proposed tax would be about £10 yearly.

FORM No. 12,483. Farmer.

About £5 per annum.

D. ABBOTT GREEN, FINGRINGHÖE HALL, COLOCHESTER, ESSEX ; Farmer.

About 5s. per acre all round.

E. O'NEILL, KNAVINSTOWN, KILDARE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

About 2½ % on £200, total £5 on corn.

A. O'DONNELL, J.P., CURRAGH HOUSE, GORESBRIDGE, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

£1 per acre on corn crop.

P. KELLY, KILMORONEY, ATHY ; Farmer.

Probably from £7 to £10.

J. BURGESS, FINNOE HOUSE, BORRISOKANE, TIPPÉRARY ; Farmer.
£15.

E. WATSON, RATHANGAN, KILDARE ; Farmer.

About 10 %.

J. COFFEY, RATHANGAN, KILDARE ; Farmer.

5 % on £300—£15.

G. W. CONSTABLE, INNERLEITHEN, PEEBLES ; Estate Agent.

A 2s. per qr. duty on foreign corn might have the effect of causing foreign nations to negotiate with this country and arrange tariffs, with a possible reduction in the present duties charged on our produce, such as potatoes, wool, &c.

1594

1595

1596

FORM No. 10,534. Seed Merchant.

The guiding principle throughout should be, that the capital of the nation is the working power of its population, and that the labour of the country (in which we include bankers, merchants, lawyers, clerks, factory hands, in fact all who have not quite independent means of livelihood) must be protected in the same way as all other nations do. Millions of pounds sterling of wages now earned abroad should go into the pockets of our people, and with these millions more earned in this country, every trade in this country, and its general prosperity would improve. Preferential tariffs should be arranged with all of our Colonies and dependencies on all manufactured goods. All raw produce (including wheat) should be introduced into this country free from all quarters. If necessary to give an advantage to any particular colony, such as New Zealand or Canada, whence wheat is largely exported, flour should be admitted free from such Colonies, and, if necessary, from all British Colonies and dependencies, while from other quarters it would pay a duty.

BUSCK & Co., 66, MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C. ; Corn Merchants.

All feeding corn, including barley, should be free, and a heavy duty on flour would give work to many thousands of labourers and only raise the price of bread a trifle, if at all.

Several farmers make the general statement that in their opinion the proposed duty would only benefit them if rates and taxes were reduced by the proceeds.

Beneficial if Taxes
reduced

J. CLARKE, STRABANE, CO. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

The small duty proposed will not increase price of home production and the only benefit that would be derived would be the applying it to reduce local taxation—supply and demand regulate price. The manufacture of flour at home would place several by-products, principally bran, within reach of the home farmer. Anything that will keep the population at home is bound to improve the country.

G. P. SMITHSON, WEST CLANDON, SURREY ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion as to taxing imported corn will not benefit me as far as my farm is concerned, most likely the reverse, as I buy considerably more corn and cake than I sell. But it will do the country good and relieve taxation. This item goes on by leaps and bounds, the rates being 3 times as much now as they were 4 years ago, largely going to pay for the man that should be working on the farm, but prefers to be well done free at the workhouse. Farmers generally would be glad to see Mr. Chamberlain give up the idea of taxing imported wheat, the food of the people, as long as there was a tax on imported flour and other corn. This would give him more hope of getting what I believe to be his beneficial tariff adopted.

WM. BLACKLER, BROADHEMPSTON, TOTNES, DEVON ; Farmer.

The 2s. per qr. duty suggested by Mr. Chamberlain is a valuable means of raising a few millions towards our heavy taxation without being burdensome to any class or interest at home. In practice I do not think it will have nearly the effect on prices theory suggests. So small an impost is not going to help the home producer much, nor will it have the effect of keeping out foreign surplus produce. I am fully aware of the political prejudice raised against the duty but when the 1s. lately put on was imposed, it made not a fraction difference in the price of bread in the whole of this district, nor when the duty was removed did the consumer benefit in the slightest degree. While the price of all kinds of grain is below the cost of production in this country, it seems the grossest bigotry to begrudge the home and colonial producer the extremely small preference the duty implies. So far as any effect the duty suggested may have on the home producer, it is a gross misrepresentation to use the word "protection" as popularly understood.

FORM No. 12,062. Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn and flour will not raise the prices, but should help to relieve us of some of our heavy burdens of taxation. Maize should not be exempted ; our labourers eat but little bacon, and keeping pigs is no profit to them.

H. C. GARDNER, OMBESLEY, DROITWICH ; Farmer.

I have been opposed on this subject to the bulk of my fellow farmers and have been unable to see how protection was to benefit the tenant farmer, but it is absurd to call the present proposal "protection." I anticipate no direct benefit from such duties, but I do think, seeing the growth of public expenditure in every direction, that a large revenue may be raised in this way and felt by no one, and that such revenue may be used to relieve the agriculturist from the burden of local rates he now has to bear and help him in other ways. It will ensure the nation against starvation, by ensuring by means of a bounty, the growth of so much wheat in this country.

J. COOK, WESTWICK HALL, CAMBRIDGE, CAMBS. ; Farmer.

None whatever with so small a duty, except that by a large revenue being received from this source, taxes upon land might be reduced. This was most conclusively proved by the 1s. registration duty, which may be taken as an equivalent to the proposed 2s., as it was charged upon all corn. While this tax was charged there was no perceptible increase in price, or when removed was any decrease observed ; in fact, in my opinion it had no effect whatever upon the price of English corn.

WM. KILBY, NOTTON, BARNSLEY, YORK ; Land and Tenant Right Valuer.

I don't expect much benefit unless the 2s. per qr. duty on corn goes to reduce rates and other charges on land. I assume that linseed, cotton seed, rape seed, locust brans and cake made from the said seeds will be admitted duty free from all parts.

**1601 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

**Beneficial if Taxes
reduced**
—continued.

G. BOWSER, THE FIRS, FRISKNEY, S.O. LINCOLNSHIRE ; Farmer.

We should receive about 1s. from the 2s.; the Government would receive the other 1s., and so relieve taxes.

C. POPPLE, WINTERBTON, DONCASTER ; Farmer.

Merely to the extent of giving us cheaper offals, unless the money raised by the duty was devoted to the relief of local taxation in some form.

E. ROBINSON, SAND HUTTON, YORK, EAST RIDING ; Farmer.

We should receive very little more for our corn, but it would raise a lot of money and part of it ought to go towards the local rates. The sender would have the duty to pay, seeing we are the largest buyers. Had they plenty of other customers the consumer would have to pay the duty.

J. SPEIR, NEWTON, GLASGOW ; Farmer.

The duty suggested will not appreciably alter prices or in any way specially benefit farmers unless in the relief of taxation equivalent to the duty on imports. If prices are not altered, little or no benefit can result to tenant farmers. If prices are raised on an apparent permanent basis, their increase will in great part be discounted on any re-arrangement of rent. The increased production of milling offals will be almost certain to be followed by lower prices for these, which at present are the dearest foods on the market. If this happens farmers will obtain some trifling benefit. Any impetus (artificial or otherwise) to manufactures, without a corresponding impetus to agriculture, is almost certain to cause a decrease in the already limited supply of labour. If this happens, the cost of producing food will be greater. Unless prices are increased or cost of production is lessened, tenant farmers will derive no benefit from any change. As far as I can see, the proposals at present before the country, are unlikely to bring about either.

R. W. HOBBS, KELMSCOTT, LECHLADE, GLOS. ; Farmer.

The 2s. duty on corn will make very slight difference in price to either producer or consumer, but it would bring in a considerable sum which we hope could go towards a reduction in rates. I am glad it is proposed to admit maize free, and linseed, cotton seed and all other feeding stuffs also whether in the raw form or converted into meal or cake. I would say that the average amount spent on feeding stuffs during the last 3 years on my farm has been £3,410, while the average amount of corn grown is £2,447, so that as far as I am individually concerned it is as essential to get cheaper feeding stuffs as dearer corn.

J. S. JOHNSTON, CRAILING HALL, JEDBURGH ; Farmer.

I do not think the tax suggested will raise the price of corn, and therefore cannot directly benefit agriculture. We would benefit from decreased taxation and to some extent by the increase in feeding stuff caused by milling the foreign grain in this country. Agriculture would benefit most by increased prosperity in the manufacturing interests. With increased wages the demand for food, especially meat, would be greater.

J. MACKESSACK, KINLOSS, FORRES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

If a duty is put on other grain, it should be on maize also, as it is used instead of barley in making grain whisky and beer to the disadvantage of home-grown barley. The small duty might be used in relief of local rates.

J. KNIGHT, HARTING, PETERSFIELD, HANTS ; Farmer.

The proposed 2s. duty would be very good for revenue purposes ; it would also assist the English miller and help the farmer a little, but not much, as the Colonial stuff would keep the price low. If the revenue was increased sufficiently for the Government to bear the cost of lunatics, main roads, and possibly other grants of like nature, this would be the way that agriculture would be benefited more than it would directly, as 2s. per qr. would not tempt people to grow more corn.

E. JOHNSON, HIGH CATTON, YORK ; Farmer.

The duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain would not benefit me much in the shape of raising the price of corn, but it would make foreign producers contribute something towards the taxation of this country, and relieve home producers who are burdened to death by rates and taxes.

S. READ, SANDERTON, PRINCES RISBORO', BUCKS. ; Farmer.

With regard to the 2s. duty it will not directly help the corn grower, as it will be paid by the producer or importer and will not increase the market value of our home-grown. There might be some indirect advantage if the proceeds from this duty are directed to reduce local taxation. As far as assisting agriculture, nothing but an increase of price, sufficient to pay the cost of production, would be of much benefit, and that would mean a greater cost of living to the consumer.

FORM No. 12,168. Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on corn will never cause Cleveland to be again what it once was, viz., one of the best wheat-growing districts in England. It might certainly assist by paying some of the heavy rates and taxes, which fall unduly on land, and therefore relieve this country, which is in a fair way of being placed out of cultivation altogether owing to increasing rates, expenses and taxations. A qr. of wheat cannot be produced in this neighbourhood without a certain proportion being paid directly as taxation. Therefore, a British farmer should be placed on the same level as a foreigner, and be allowed to produce his corn absolutely duty free if foreign corn is admitted on those terms.

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H. HAILEY, GT. WYMONDLEY, STEVENAGE, HERTS. ; Farmer.

As 2s. per qr. on foreign corn and flour is not likely to raise the price of corn, it will not be of any assistance unless applied to reducing the burden on agricultural land. 2s. per qr. preference may bring into this country considerably more Colonial corn, but will not keep any foreign out.

E. W. WILSON, FLITCHAM ABBEY, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

So much depends on supply and demand. Countries growing a surplus must get rid of it, in the shape of raw material, flour or meat. The benefit would be by lessening taxation. 4s. per qr. might raise the price of British corn.

W. H. THOMSON, OVER ROXBURGH, ROXBURGH, N.B. ; Farmer.

This and the succeeding question *re* meat, are best answered in Scotch fashion by asking another : How will the proposed duty affect imports of these articles ? Agriculture is not a pursuit which can be changed and shifted at any moment, and it seems likely that land in any part of the world which is at present producing wheat or barley or oats, or beef or mutton, will continue to produce one or other of these articles in spite of tariffs. It would follow that the same amount being produced the same amount will be sold, and under anything approaching present conditions the surplus must be sold in Britain. My conclusion is that the proposed duties would not affect the imports and therefore the prices, and the only benefit to me personally would be through relief of taxation. If barley were taxed on entering the country instead of the drink made from it, it would benefit barley growers here, and need not raise the price to the consumer—the revenue of the country might, however, be affected. Mr. Chamberlain's tariff proposals so far seem calculated to benefit every industry except agriculture.

1606

FORM NO. 12,113.

2s. per qr. will not be any benefit as we shall get as much in from the Colonies as we do now from the foreigner. Nothing but a bounty of 10s. per qr. on home-grown wheat will be any benefit to us.

Beneficial if
Bounty granted

FORM NO. 2,615. Millers.

Wheat should be free, and to encourage wheat in England some bounty system should be established as a national granary safeguard. The flour trade wants no protection but a fair market, when we could export flour cheaper than America ; Colonial preference always excepted.

MAJ.-GEN. F. E. SOTHERBY, ECTON, NORTHAMPTON ; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on corn of no good whatever. Would like a higher duty on flour, as the value of offals to farmers is great. Would like a 10s. per qr. bonus for wheat kept in stack for a year.

1607

C. B. FISHER, DESBOROUGH, MARKET HARBOUR, NOTTS. ; Land Agent.

2s. per qr. would be of very small benefit to the British farmer. A bonus would be more beneficial and far more likely to be acceptable to the nation. First, because it overcomes the deeply-rooted objection to taxing food. Second, because, having regard to the general interests of the community, the nation is inclined to view with alarm (more especially since the Japanese have shown how vulnerable a fleet is), the very small reserve of food stuffs we hold, and consequently, how easily famine prices might occur from a temporary scare. The bonus should be for wheat kept in stack by the farmers for a year and must be substantial, at least 10s. per qr. and for a period of years certain, as in the Agricultural Rates Act. Otherwise, landlords would not risk land laid down to grass, though unsuitable for that purpose, being ploughed up. Nothing would conduce to the benefit of British agriculture so much as putting the very large area of wheat-growing land to its proper purpose, on a profitable basis.

H. LONG, SHIPPEA HILL, ELY, CAMBS. ; Farmer.

Every farmer should be compelled to grow a certain acreage of wheat—where the land is suitable—and a bonus allowed for what is grown. The 2s. duty would not help us sufficiently.

L. C. WRIGHT, TULBECK GRANGE, CHEPSTOW, MONMOUTH ; Farmer.

1608

It will be of assistance, but nothing will save the agricultural industry of England, except security of price at which corn can be grown at a profit. This means a bounty as an inducement to produce at all events a large half of the nation's food supply at home. This must surely be faced. No business could be worked at a profit with the enormous waste that the nation is now suffering blindly—spending millions of pounds abroad to produce what can be well produced at home.

R. BLOOMER, SHANKILL, WHITEHALL, KILKENNY, IRELAND ; Land Steward.

Does not go far enough to induce farmers to grow wheat for which we would require to get 1s. per stone or £1 per barrel of 20 stones. If the Government could see their way to give a bounty for say, 5 years, making up the difference, it would greatly increase the acreage under wheat. I do not know of anything that would be a greater benefit from an agricultural point of view than an increase in the acreage under wheat.

FORM NO. 12,454. Farmer.

I favour a duty upon flour. It would not raise the price of food, but would restore the milling industry and give the farmer the advantage of the use of offals, and I should give preference to our Colonies by admitting their flour free. Also a bonus on wheat to come out of the import duty on manufactured goods.

A. H. CARTER, HOLLY HOUSE, MAGDALEN, KING'S LYNN; Farmer.

We could do with the offals of the wheat. I would let it in free, but I would certainly put a duty on the flour, say 10s. per sack of 20 stones. A 2s. duty would be of no use to the farmer, being chiefly paid by the importer. Perhaps it might raise the price of our corn 6d. per qr. through the year. A substantial bonus on home-grown wheat ought certainly to have the attention of the Government; say a farmer who thrashes his wheat in August, September and October and up to December, ought not to have less than 30s. per qr., then an increase of 1s. 6d. per qr. per month to August.

E. GREEN, THE MOORS, WELSHPOOL, MONTGOMERY; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's scheme is the right one, but instead of 2s. on flour it should be 4s. or 5s. We want the wheat grown in this country so as to have the offals for feeding purposes. I feel that whatever toll may be put on imported wheat it will not increase the price to the consumer, or raise the price for the farmer. The importer will pay it. The only way I can see the farmer will be helped is for this money, extracted from the foreigner, to be given him either to relieve his rates, or what I would like to see, a well thought-out scheme of a bounty on wheat-growing in the British Isles.

FORM No. 12,182. Farmer.

It certainly must help the English farmer to the extent of 2s. per qr., but supply and demand rule the price. Wheat cannot be grown under 36s. per qr. at an average cost of £7 per acre on a well-managed farm under the Agricultural Holdings Act. England can produce from 10-12 million qrs. at a paying price and that must be a standard price of 36s. per qr. If England is to produce more of her own wheat, and wheat growing to prosper, it must have a bounty—not a bounty from an agriculturists' but from a national point of view. 12,000,000 qrs. of wheat grown in England at say 6s. 8d. per qr. bounty, would amount to £4,000,000, which would be far better and cheaper than the Government building and maintaining warehouses for storing foreign wheat for use in the event of war. Wheat is not like other corn; whatever the condition or price it must be sold, as it cannot be used for feeding purposes, except in very small quantities and then there is a risk.

T. WARD, CARRINGTON GRANGE, BOSTON, Lincs.; Farmer.

It would benefit me little, if at all. Nothing will do that does not raise the price of English grain to 1s. per stone. This surely is not an extravagant price and would not hurt the consumer. I fear the British farmer would still be swamped by Colonial produce as badly as now and that he would not derive the least benefit, and I suggest that the duties levied on foreign grain be given as a bonus on home-grown wheat. I feel sure that in the event of an imposition of duties, the consumer and manufacturer will receive the greater consideration and that unless agriculture is well looked after, it will not be long discovering that the small substance offered it, is simply a shadow after all.

1611 T. H. SCOTT, GROVE HOUSE, FILEY, E. Yorks.; Manager of Landed Property.

The duty suggested of 2s. per qr. on imported corn, except maize, would not in my opinion materially help the British farmer. What we want is to encourage the home cultivation of wheat and barley. A 5s. bonus to the farmer on each qr. of English wheat grown by him, to be paid out of the duty received from imported corn and flour, would bring into cultivation much wheat land now virtually uncultivated. If beer could be described as brewed solely from malted barley and hops, this would be of the greatest benefit both to the English farmer and the consumer. It is generally admitted by high-class brewers that more strength can be extracted from British malted barley than from that of any other country.

W. W. WEST, WISBECH, CAMBS.; Farmer

The duty should be expended in granting a bounty on English wheat to encourage the growth of wheat in this country. The proposed duty on corn will to a very small extent indeed assist the East Anglian farmer, America and Russia cannot afford to lose the English market for wheat, and will still compete with the Colonies, and the price in England will rarely be affected by the proposed duty. Maize admitted free will affect the price of English barley and oats. Malt substitutes made from maize will be used to the disadvantage of English barley; and maize will affect the price of oats as food for horses. I think a duty on imported flour a good thing, as the present tendency is to produce flour at large ports where foreign wheat can be bought cheaply and the carriage to these centres on English wheat is often higher than it is on foreign, including both rail and water carriage and the offals can be sent from the Tyne to Antwerp at less freight than to Boston or Lynn. We require these offals for home consumption and they are of course lost to us on imported flour. I am of opinion that the growth of sugar beet should be encouraged by the Government by the erection of sugar factories, or, if not erecting them, giving every facility for private enterprise in their erection. At present Continental nations have the complete monopoly of the industry.

W. A. PROUT, SAWBRIDGEWORTH, HEERTS.; Farmer.

I should like to see the 2s. per qr. duty put on foreign wheat, or even 5s., but I do not consider the former would benefit me much, if at all, as the price is regulated by supply and demand. I understand that a 10% duty is suggested on foreign machinery, manures and feeding stuffs. If so this would be very detrimental to the farmer, as he would have to pay more for these articles. I may state that I am distinctly in favour of a bounty of 5s. per qr. on English-grown wheat, provided the farmer kept it in stock until April. It would encourage the growth of wheat and possibly 4 millions or more acres would be grown instead of under 2 millions. Labourers would have work and therefore be kept on the soil instead of crowding the towns as they now do when the land is laid down, in many cases clay land, to worthless grass. Above all it would be a national benefit, and afford a large supply of food in case of war. The 2s. duty would probably bring in £5,000,000, and this would suffice to pay the bounty on over 4 million acres of English-grown wheat, assuming an average of 4 qrs. per acre. Modern science would enable them to grow more per acre.

1613

H. F. PLUMPTRE, GOODNESTONE, NEAR DOVER.

This would increase and cheapen the supply of bran and offals, an important benefit to me, and indirectly a benefit in raising revenue and presumably reducing taxation. The only way to induce the farmer to grow more cereals is to raise the price, and the only way to do this without raising the price of food to the consumer is, in my opinion, by a bounty—say the cost of two battleships every year. The farmer would grow more wheat and the navy would have less work protecting our food supply in time of war. Still I can see difficulties in apportioning the bounty.

T. CHRISTIAN, DROXFORD, HANTS; Farmer.

As Mr. Chamberlain's proposals now stand, I shall lose more than gain, especially in the near future. Under this scheme of preference to the Colonies, the production of wheat will enormously increase, and hence lessen the money value of my own produce. Feeding stuffs, manures, and also machinery will be considerably dearer through a duty on manufactured articles which may grow through the superior voting power of the manufacturer, whilst I am convinced the consumer will never allow a substantial duty on food. If Mr. Chamberlain can amend his scheme of preference to the Colonies by a 2s. duty on all foreign corn (except maize) and a substantial duty on flour from any and every source and not allow more than a fair corresponding duty on feeding stuffs, manures and machinery there might be some advantage, but even this, in my opinion, would not largely stimulate wheat production on any class of farm. Nothing short of a bounty would do this.

FORM No. 3,277. Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

We believe that a small subsidy on the growth of English wheat or even an exemption from rates, or both, would do a good deal to extend the acreage. Thousands of acres are at present growing nothing which ought to be producing wheat and straw. Such land will not grow pasture that is good for anything, but will produce good crops of wheat, beans and oats, if sufficient encouragement could be given to cultivate it; our production of wheat wants bringing up to half our consumption.

48 farmers state in so many words that the proposed duty would make very little difference to them. Of little benefit
Other replies are as follows:—

J. W. DRENNAN, CARSE HALL, LIMAVADY JUNC., CO. LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

I don't think the farmers in this district will benefit much, if at all, from the proposed duty, so long as Colonial produce is admitted entirely free. Colonial oats and hay are flooding the markets we supplied from the North of Ireland. What with cheap freights and preferential rates, Canada can land produce cheaper in the English markets than we can. For instance, a firm of produce contractors I supplied with oats and hay for some time stopped last year, saying they could have the Canadian stuff 4s. to 5s. per ton cheaper; so that if we cannot have some protection from that quarter I don't see any benefit.

W. F. BELL, LUTHRIE BANK, CUPAR, FIFESHIRE; Farmer.

I can't anticipate any great change in the price of corn. The foreigner will pay the duty to get into our market, as the price of corn will be entirely ruled by the Colonies.

J. HUNTER, BLAKELAW FARM, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, NORTHUMBERLAND; Farmer.

2s. per qr. on corn, Colonial corn being admitted free, would probably not increase the price of corn 1s. per qr., which would only make sales a little brisker, but would not benefit farmers much.

D. A. SPENCE, DUNNINALD MAINS, MONTROSE, FORFARSHIRE; Farmer.

So small a duty as 2s. will not benefit farmers in like circumstances to ourselves to nearly the extent some people think. We grow $\frac{1}{2}$ wheat and $\frac{1}{2}$ oats, which is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the whole. You have to deduct the seed (4 bus. wheat and 5 bus. oats), which brings the produce of grain for sale down to under 5 qrs. per acre. Allowing that we got the full benefit of the 2s., which of course we would not do, if the Colonial can get in free, this would mean under 10s. per acre for the portion under grain, or that each acre of land could not possibly be benefited more than about 3s.

D. LANE, CHARLECOTE, WARWICK; Farmer.

A 2s. duty will have little or no effect, as the Colonies will soon import more than enough to check any tendency to a rise in price. But to encourage our Colonies is in the right direction, and I would support the prohibition of imports of fine flour from foreign countries, to give home mills more employment, and increase supplies of offals for feed. Nothing should be done to check the supply of cheap cattle feed, as it is unwise for English farmers to grow rough barley or oats, and I prefer that the foreigner should do it for us. But fine wheat, barley or oats, for which our soil is suited, should be encouraged if possible.

A. RHIBBLE, BROON HOUSE, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND; Farmer.

The duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain will make practically no difference to our home-grown produce. The imports from the Colonies will still come free and they have enough surplus to keep the British Isles going. We will still get the imports from foreign countries, which will benefit our national exchequer. A 2s. duty on maize would do no harm, there might be a temporary rise but surplus produce must find a market.

J. BROWN, MILTON HILL, FORRES, ELGIN; Farmer.

I do not think to any appreciable extent, the only advantage would be to the Colonies, but I think our Colonies should have an advantage over foreign countries. I think maize should be taxed, because, if admitted free, it would always increase the production of raw grain spirits and correspondingly reduce the price of home-grown barley for the production of good malt whisky—which is in my opinion the best of all beverages. Mr. Chamberlain's suggestions are on the right lines, except the maize.

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1617 **Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

**Of little benefit
—continued.**

FORM No. 12,243. Farmer.

It will affect me very little, as I use a large quantity of maize, and consume by stock most of the oats.

W. H. HILTON, EAST CLAYDON, WINSLOW, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

On my grass farm the corn tax would make very little difference, but I cannot see why Mr. Chamberlain should not exclude wheat altogether, and put more on oats and barley. I also do not see why maize should be excepted, as I do not know a labouring man who buys a sack once a year. It is used chiefly in towns by large horse-keepers, and knocks down the British bean trade.

FORM No. 12,840. Farmer.

It will do no harm as long as the price of pigs and young cattle is bad, as Irish farmers must live by them while the price of corn is bad.

J. P. MALCOM, EDINBEG, ROTHESAY, BUTE ; Farmer.

As a dairy farmer consuming the most of the grain grown on the farm, and to keep up a supply of milk in the winter, using a quantity of feeding stuffs which are mostly imported, I am of opinion that these duties would be of little, if any, benefit to me.

J. FINDLAY, SPRINGHILL, BAILLIESTON, LANARK ; Farmer.

The proposals would not benefit me appreciably, directly, as I purchase as much foreign beans, peas, etc., for feeding dairy cattle, as I sell of home grain.

E. KIDNER, KEMPS FARM, BUCKLAND, SURREY ; Farmer.

A duty of 2s., as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain, would not raise the price of our English grain any more than 6d. per qr., and I doubt if it would be as much as 6d., so that if a farmer grows, say, 100 acres of wheat a year, and the crop averages 5 qrs. per acre, the farmer would not benefit by it more than £12 10s. on his wheat growing.

A. BRIGSTOCKE, BLAENHANT, BONCATH, R.S.O., CARDIGAN, S. WALES ; Farmer.

Very little help to the farmers in our district, and more than counterbalanced if a duty is put on foreign manures and feeding cakes, &c.

E. W. CADDICK, CARADOC, ROSS, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

I do not think that the tax, although it may be a slight help, would encourage any more wheat growing in this district, but a strong duty on imported flour would, I should think, cause feeding materials to be cheaper.

N. J. HINE, J.P., BALDOCK, HEERTS. ; Farmer.

The benefit would be small, as feeding stuffs would be enhanced in value. Should prefer a heavy duty on imported hay, straw, potatoes, &c.

S. KIDNER, BICKLEY, MILVERTON, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

Little, if any. The duty proposed would not influence, or at any rate decrease, the amount grown in any country, and as prices are ruled by supply and demand, and not by cost of production, the quantities on the market being the same the prices would be the same, thus taking toll from the foreigner for the use of our markets towards the ever-increasing national expenditure.

O. D. JOHNSON, BARROW, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

It is difficult to estimate the advantage to agriculture by such a duty. In my opinion, it would slightly increase the price, but not to the extent of the duty, a part of such duty being paid by the foreigner in order to gain access to our market.

A. F. T. DRAKE, DOGDEAN FARM, SALISBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

There are many silly short-sighted farmers who only regard import duties as extra income, and do not grasp that the announcement of import duties will create an unwarrantable competition for land by tradesmen unpractised in agriculture, and others who would be farmers. This will harden rents beyond a living rent, so that the sitting farmer will have perhaps to leave his holding, or surely dwindle out, leaving the landlords after a feast of hope to face a debacle as they had to do in the early eighties. Feeding stuffs freed from competition by protected corn will go higher, machinery will be dearer, and the labourers are practically promised to have more money. It is the duty of a real honest government to thoroughly forecast the possible plight of the farmer, and not to establish import duties unless they are able to give him sufficient privileges wherewith to meet these fresh charges that will then come upon him. If Mr. Chamberlain is honest and earnest, as I give him credit to be, he should recognise that if he overburdens the farmer, to satisfy and tempt other interests, his scheme must surely fail. I do not think he should give the farmers much, but it should be enough, and published that it is only enough, and that a farm is not a gold mine.

A. REEVES, REEVEMOUNT, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I fear this would not assist us very much. Barley is my most important crop, and what I would like someone to explain is, how it is that while I can only get 13s. 6d. to 14s. for my barley now from the maltsters, the brewers and distillers are getting a higher price (at least, the consumers are paying a higher price) for their drink than when I was paid 22s. per barrel for my barley. If the law would compel spirits to be sold as "pure malt", or from whatever source distilled, with a distinct label as to the source, I believe a good deal of help to the growers would result.

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A. W. MERRY, F.S.I., LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE; Land Agent, Surveyor and Auctioneer.

A duty will primarily affect the arable land farmer, but I think it will not affect him appreciably, as 2s. is only the difference of price between a well and a badly screened sample of corn. In all probability the extra cost of machinery, and more than probable extra wages, will counteract any benefit. The duty on flour is the right thing undoubtedly. If maize is free, purchasers and consumers of other foreign feeding stuffs to produce meat might have a grievance; but as this cannot be grown in England, there is more to be said in favour of its free import.

W. RUTHERFORD, CRAILING TOFTS, ROXBURGH, N.B.; Farmer.

The duty, through the law of competition, would eventually be pocketed by the landlord. The duty would for a short period pass into my pocket; but, should feeding stuffs rise, as I purchase $\frac{2}{3}$ of what I should get in grain, my temporary gain would be small. Any such duty would stimulate the growth of grain in our Colonies to an enormous extent, and eventually, even if the duty was raised to 5s. or 10s., we should be deluged with stuff.

J. MCGLINCHY, J.P., STRABANE, DONEGAL; Merchant.

I would be in favour of any proposal which would benefit our home farmers, as my business is altogether with the farming class (so are my sympathies); but I am of opinion that even a duty of 2s. per qr. on corn and flour would make so little difference in the selling price that foreign corns would still command the market so we would be taxing our labouring classes without benefiting the farmer. I am opposed to any duty on bread stuffs. I would include foreign bacon with the bread stuffs.

1622

FORM No. 12,371. Farmer.

I don't think it would do me any good, or anyone else any harm. I am in favour of it, because it would collect a lot of money without anyone feeling it.

P. S. BARRINGTON, BALLYMAN, BRAY, CO. DUBLIN; Farmer.

As far as I am concerned, it would make very little difference; the additional duty on wheat would not amount to more than 1s. per sack of 20 stones. A good or bad season would make more difference.

J. & U. ROSE, EYTHORPE PARK FARM, WINCHENDON, AYLESBURY, BUCKS.; Farmers.

As we sell so little corn, the duty would not affect us much. We think that importing so much manufactured flour works adversely to us by raising the price of offals and feeding stuffs.

E. GARDNER, SPENCERS, MAIDENHEAD, BERKSHIRE; Farmer.

I cannot see that the above suggestion of Mr. Chamberlain would be of assistance or benefit to agriculture, indeed I fear the contrary, for I think Colonial imports would be stimulated without in any way slackening foreign imports, and as a consequence competition with the British farmer would be keener than ever. I doubt farmers deriving benefit from home production of offals. Could the old country milling industry be revived, it might be so, but the great port millers have got too fast a hold on the trade, and any extra offals obtained in this country are just as likely to be exported as offered at home.

1623

C. J. JOHNSTON, NEWMILL, ELGIN, N.B.; Farmer.

2s. per qr. would make no appreciable difference. Maize should be put on the same level as other grain, as it competes with barley, being used in the manufacture of raw grain whisky.

C. M. BRUCE, FORRES, N.B.; Farmer.

I do not look for much benefit, if any, from the 2s. duty on corn, as there are so many hostile influences in operation. (1) Colonial corn being free, also the home grown, the duty-paying stuff stands or will stand in small proportion to the total consumption of the country. (2) Supposing the corn bearing duty equalled half our consumption, this would mean a net duty of 1s. per qr. on the total. (3) The consumer cannot be said to have to pay the full amount of any duty whatsoever, but at the most shares it reciprocally with the producer, the middleman, the transporter, &c. Hence the sum left to operate on the prices of corn stuffs in the country would only be about 7d. per qr., or thereby. The corresponding duty on flour—which I understand is charged on Colonial imports as well as foreign—will tend, by bringing the corn to this country to be milled, to create an increased supply of bran, an important ingredient of feeding for stock.

1624

H. SATCHWELL, CREGGS, NEAR ROSCOMMON, CO. GALWAY; Farmer.

As I feed all the corn I grow, I don't think it would affect me, especially as it is proposed not to place a duty on maize, which I sometimes buy to supplement (by mixing) the feed I produce on my home farm.

P. D. CONROY, ROSMUCK, CO. GALWAY; Farmer.

The proposal to tax corn would not, I believe, improve the position of the farmers here, neither would it injure them very much, especially as Indian corn is excluded, this being the staple food of most of our small farmers for 4 months every year.

W. H. BARTON, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

It is doubtful if so small a duty will increase the home milling trade or induce the farmer to break up more of his land. If there was an increased milling trade farmers would have a greater quantity of refuse, such as pollard and bran. At present the latter is sold practically at the same price as wheat, weight for weight.

**1625 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Of little benefit
—continued.

J. WEEKES, KINGSWOOD GRANGE, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE, GLOS. ; Farmer.

I should not be directly benefited, as I may have to pay a little more for feeding stuffs, but indirectly I think I should have the benefit of our now defunct mills being at work. They would be contributing towards our fiscal system, "local rates," and we should get their offals, bran, &c., better and cheaper. They would also be employing labour and thus help to retain our rural population. The duties proposed, if applied to the relief of local taxation, would of course benefit all rural occupiers, and in many cases assist imperial taxpayers.

FORM No. 12,033. Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn would not have the effect of making any difference in the prices to farmers, but it would help the milling trades, and offals would be much cheaper. A tax on linseed or cotton seed would be a very bad thing for farmers, there being a very large quantity used now, both for sheep and cattle all through the year. As a farmer I think that if we made more of our corn, we should have to pay higher wages, and it is a question whether it would benefit us. Then there is the question whether we should not have to pay more for implements and machinery, and if we have to pay more for oil cakes, too, it would be out of the frying-pan into the fire. But at the same time it would perhaps help the revenue and lighten our taxes. We think that after the 2s. tax had been put on, and as nobody was the worse for it, it was a very bad policy to have taken it off.

1626

FORM No. 12,450. Farmer.

The proposed duty would be no use to the corn farmer, as Colonial corn would keep it down, and all feeding stuffs except maize would rise by the amount of the tax imposed on them. (Maize probably rising in sympathy.) The "substantial preference" to the miller would seriously hurt the farmer who feeds stock, because then the millers would combine and raise the price of milling offal. This is not a mere opinion, as 3 or 4 years since they tried it on, and for a time succeeded in doing so, till American bran, &c., came in and swamped them. Any rise in feeding stuffs means a serious tax on a dairy and stock farmer. My own yearly expenditure on feeding stuffs is nearly £500, rent being about £350. As under the suggested tariff reform proposals the effect on farming would be very slight, slightly beneficial perhaps in a few instances, slightly adverse in a good many more, the latter in an increasing ratio according to the class of farming (telling most heavily on the highest farming), it does not seem as if "detailed information" would benefit anyone as yet. Looking at it broadly it seems to me the farmer stands to lose in any case.

H. T. BENSTED, TEYNHAM COURT, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT ; Farmer.

It will assist me a little in price for wheat and barley, but if a duty be put on feeding stuffs, it will take away the benefit of a duty on corn. A duty on hops would assist English growers and provide more labour for a large number of men, women and children from the towns.

1627

F. W. P. MATTHEWS, SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD, OXON. ; Farmer.

The portion of the 2s. paid by the consumer would be the increase in my price. If the American producer paid 1s. per qr. and the American railways a portion, it would not leave a clear 1s. for me. But it would give such a preference to Canada and so increase the production there, that I think the American would soon have to pay the whole 2s., in which case I should get nothing.

J. NOWLSON PARHAM, SUTTON-VENEY, WARMINSTER, WILTS. ; Farmer.

I think so small a duty is no use to the British farmer, but would be an assistance to the revenue. It would advance the price of corn very little, if any, but I look upon it as an impossible matter. The poor man will not have his food taxed—even nominally—for I don't think he would have to pay more, at any rate appreciably more, for his food). The game is not worth the candle. It will only upset the labouring classes whilst conferring no benefit on anyone except the taxpayer. Had the 1s. duty been left on, no one would have interfered with it. Any small duty is no use to farmers and a large one would benefit landlords more than their tenants. Farming is not and never was a money-making business.

FORM No. 12,115.

The duty on corn is so small that it would do very little if any good. Would like to see all manufactured goods and produce heavily taxed ; in fact, a retaliation duty.

1628

Of no Benefit

53 farmers in various parts of the United Kingdom state in so many words that the proposed duty would be of no benefit to them, and some of them oppose the change in the general interests of the community. Other answers are as follows :—

A. R. WHITE, MERE, WILTS. ; Farmer.

No assistance or benefit whatever, as benefits derived will be then counterbalanced by increased cost of labour, cakes, feeding stuffs, &c., &c. Farmers have taken advantage of the low price of corn and have sown a large acreage of arable land down to pasture, and have thereby become greater consumers than producers, especially in the south-western counties.

E. M. NUNNELEY, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ; Farmer.

This proposal would not be of the slightest assistance or benefit to me. If Colonial corn is admitted free the price of English corn would rise very slightly, if at all ; whilst any duty would tend to make landlords demand more rent. If the adoption of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals were followed (as he says it would be) by a rise in wages, I should lose heavily.

FORM No. 12,412. Farmer.

1629

Not at all. Labour and rents will rise. Purchased feeding stuffs will rise (even if no duty is put on them) as labour in towns will rise, and the consumer will pay for it. In fact everything we buy will rise, and the 2s. per qr. on corn will not be enough to balance the account as the margin between debtor and creditor is so small. I say free trade is the best for tenant and farmer.

FORM No. 12,156. Farmer.

None whatever. The recent 1s. duty on wheat took £50 per annum out of my pocket because it raised the price of all my purchased feeding stuffs from 5s. to 8s. per ton without any corresponding benefit to me.

FORM No. 12,781. Farmer.

The above duty would not benefit me at all, for I have to buy bread stuff. It would be no encouragement to break up any more of my land, labour is so high, men and women so scarce, that the wages would absorb the increased price of corn which would be obtained by the duty. I had a staff of men and women some time ago at reasonable hire; they are all gone away now, their houses unroofed.

L. FORESTIER WALKER, PARK HOUSE, MICHAELSTONE-Y-FEDW, MONMOUTHSHIRE.

In my particular instance, or in this particular district, the proposal will be of a little or no assistance. The low price of wheat enables farmers to use their small crops instead of using feeding stuffs and creates less demand for the latter, hence keeping the price down.

1630

J. SUGGITT, SHERIFF HUTTON CASTLE, YORK; Farmer.

I fail to see where we shall receive any advantage, if we get a little more for our corn other things we have to purchase will cost us more.

A. AMOS, SPRING GROVE FARM, WYE, KENT; Farmer.

Anything that makes corn, cake, or any feeding stuff dearer will handicap me in producing meat; also manures such as guano, if taxed, would handicap me growing fruit and hops. Any duty is so much more freight or railway carriage for me to pay. As I have no desire to go back to corn growing, any duty will do me harm. No amount of duty on foreign flour would start our country mills again; in fact all inland mills would be shut up, and the making of flour done at the large ports.

A. MACINTYRE, ROTHESAY, ISLE OF BUTE; Farmer.

A decided disadvantage in every way as I pay over £200 yearly for feeding stuffs, mostly grinding beans (Egyptian or Smyrna). Maize being free is of no great moment to dairy farmers, as beans at a reasonable price are much to be preferred and are almost indispensable. On the other hand, free maize will always cheapen home-grown oats.

1631

R. LAKE, TEYNHAM, KENT; Farmer.

The amount of these proposed duties would have no direct appreciable effect. If their imposition resulted in greater national prosperity agriculture would doubtless receive indirect benefit from improved demand.

PROFESSOR WILLIAMS, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH.

The proposed duty would be of no advantage to the Welsh farmer.

A. JOYCE, LEENANE, CO. GALWAY; Farmer.

At the rate of 2s. a qr. on wheat and corn I would lose about 8s. a year on all the flour I consume.

P. J. O'REILLY, CROSSMOLINA, MAYO; Farmer.

Speaking from my own experience and as a shopkeeper having a knowledge of the wants of the country around, the above tax would be very injurious; as, while the principal opposition to our commodities comes from the Colonies, all the tax would fall on us, the consumer. The principal food stuff for man and beast is flour and Indian corn, and anything that would raise the price above what it is now would be disastrous to this country.

1632

F. STRATTON, NEWPORT, MONMOUTHSHIRE; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on foreign corn, Colonial being admitted free, would not enable farmers to grow corn at a profit where they cannot do so now. A duty on flour would benefit the farmer by giving him cheaper feeding stuffs.

T. CARRINGTON SMITH, ADMASTON, RUGELEY, STAFFORDSHIRE; Farmer.

An import duty of 2s. per qr. on foreign corn, except maize, would be inoperative and would considerably increase the expenses of production from all kinds of live stock. An import duty on any kind of corn in general use increases the cost of all other competitive food stuffs, even when they are not subject to a duty. The registration duty of 1s. on corn was in my judgment the one great mistake of an able Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it prejudicially affected the owners of all live stock. In my own district we are large purchasers of food stuffs, and sell comparatively little corn. It is an economic mistake to grow corn of any kind hereabouts, except as a food for live stock, in quantity proportionate to the straw required on one farm.

J. QUINN, KIMVARA, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

The duty proposed to be put on corn and flour would be of no benefit to me, or to this country. Heretofore the staple food of the people was potatoes, henceforth it will be bread, and any increase in the price of flour would be very injurious.

C. CURTIN, REENS, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

In my opinion it would do no good to this country to put a duty on corn and flour, as we could not go back again to tillage, as the cost of labour is constantly increasing.

A. POOLE, MUNINATANE, CO. DOWN, IRELAND ; Farmer.

Of no benefit, as no oats are grown for sale, and no wheat. All flour has to be bought, so we would have to pay the extra duty on it.

W. BROWN, LAURENCEKIRK, KINCARDINE ; Farmer.

Doubtful if any better, as other things would rise in proportion, in course of time, so would neither better tenant nor proprietor.

A. F. DAVIES, BROAD OAK, BROUGHTON, CHESTER, FLINTSHIRE ; Farmer.

As nearly all the wheat, oats and beans, besides hay and roots grown on this farm, are consumed by the live stock on it, and in addition, between £300 and £400 of other feeding stuffs are bought, any duty on foreign stuffs would be a disadvantage.

FORM No. 12,469. Farmer.

I do not think it would benefit me at all, as my cake and grain bills far exceed my receipts for corn sold.

W. S. YATES, LEINSTER LODGE, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The suggested duty would not benefit me in the least. My staple crop is barley of superior quality, and does not seem to feel the foreign competition so keenly as other grain, particularly wheat, for which a rise of 2s. per qr. would leave it still a long way from a paying price. As Colonial corn is to be admitted free I don't think the price would rise with the duty suggested.

D. H. JAMES, BAILYBEDW, MAESYCRUGIAN, R.S.O., CARMARTHENSHIRE ; Farmer.

A duty on corn would be directly against the interests of farmers in Wales. We do not raise corn, except to get enough fodder straw for winter keep. Experience has proved beyond doubt that it will not pay; therefore the cheaper we buy imported corn the better it pays us to fatten pigs and beasts. Much of the land in Wales is wholly unsuited for growing wheat, and small farmers find it answers their purpose better to buy their flour rather than to grow wheat under adverse conditions.

ALBERT PELL, HASSELBEACH, NORTHAMPTON ; Farmer.

I am a free trader and of course as a landowner have suffered severely by the fall in prices due in a large degree to free imports. I also was afflicted in the same way as a tenant farmer of land (I rented some 600 acres), but I escaped further hurt by coming out. Legislation has reduced values of farm produce, and consequently rents. Any legislation that raises values must be followed by a rise of rents. I am not sure that the tenant will then gain much.

H. RAYMOND, HONEY CORSE, LAUGHANE, R.S.O., CARMARTHENSHIRE.

No advantage, but would be willing to it being put on to assist corn-growing farmer.

R. DUNNE, KILMOGANNY, Co. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

2s. per qr. duty on corn would not benefit me, as I buy all the flour that is used in my house, both for my own family and my working hands who are supported on the farms. It would not pay to grow wheat for so small a rise in its price. Therefore it would mean a loss to me.

R. S. CLEMENTS, J.P., BERAGH, TYRONE ; Farmer.

I am altogether opposed to a duty or tariff on all breadstuffs. I believe it could do farmers here no good as we use all our grain for feeding purposes and buy all our flour (which is imported), besides a great deal of other feeding stuffs for cattle and fowls.

J. T. STEWART, ATTYBODYN, LLANDYSSIL, S. WALES ; Farmer.

It will not be any benefit in our course of farming, as it may raise the price of feeding stuffs to our cattle correspondingly, and we do not grow enough wheat to sell any.

H. GREGG, STILLORGAN, Co. DUBLIN ; Farmer.

The proposed duty will make no difference to the price, and should be put on maize as well as corn. The supply and demand will regulate the price, not the duty.

C. CAMPBELL, STAPLEFORD, NEWARK, Lincs. ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on foreign corn would do me no good whatever. Suppose 40 acres of wheat at 4 qrs.: 160 qrs. at 2s. = £16; assume the price rose the 2s. (which is open to great doubt), I consider the £16 would not pay the increased cost on machinery, &c., &c. Further, from my point as a farmer, it makes no possible difference to me whence the corn comes (whether from foreign countries or Colonies) so long as it does come.

If Colonial corn comes in free, I fail to see how the price will be raised on the home market. As far as I can see, no benefit is likely to accrue through Mr. Chamberlain's proposals to agriculture. Should trade, i.e., employment in the towns, be restored to prosperity under the new order of things, it follows that many of those after returning to the land from the towns will again migrate and leave agriculture with less labour than now, which in some districts is much below requirements.

J. P. POE, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

None. If there is a duty on cotton or linseed cake it will be a direct loss to the amount of the duty. Thirty or 40 years ago a great deal of this part of Ireland was under crops, but it has almost gone out of cultivation. What advantage the farmer is to gain by having foreign corn taxed, and still having the same amount of corn as heretofore imported free from the Colonies (as would happen in a few years), I cannot see. Mr. Chamberlain's policy would put us in the position of the farmer in the Western States of America. He lives under high protection for everything he has to buy and free trade for what he has to sell. I do not think farming can long be made to pay without protection of some kind. By all means let the duty on foreign produce be double that on Colonial, but colonial free trade will not put any more land in cultivation nor help this country from being depopulated and turned into a cattle ranch.

W. J. BURGESS, STOW, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK; Auctioneer, Valuer and Land Agent.

Although it must be every way desirable to give a preference in everything to the Colonies, inducing them to trade and treat with us and not drive them to make treaties with other nations (who would gladly take them on), yet a 2s. duty with maize free is no use to me. The free maize and the larger supply of millers' offals would greatly reduce the price of oats, peas and beans, and damaged barley, and if maize is malted reduce malting barley also; 2s. would not tempt me to grow wheat.

C. ROBERTSON, HALLHILL-BY-BERRIE, KINCARDINE, N.B.; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. would not benefit farmers generally. Most farms are held on short leases, say, with a break at end of 5 or 7 years, and notwithstanding the depressed state of farming these past years, there is still a sort of land hunger. At present there are considerable numbers of men who have made money at other business who go in for farming, and such men have in the past helped to keep up the rents; besides, the raising of the necessities of life would in my opinion be against the trade of the country and would react on the farming interest; not only so, but the duty of 2s. is so small that I do not think it would help much at present.

J. SMITH, BRAINTREE, ESSEX; Farmer.

As a tenant farmer it would not be of any assistance. So much foreign feeding stuff is used that what was gained on one hand would be lost on the other. The protection which would benefit the tenant farmer is protection for his capital. In the Eastern counties there is no tenant right and every law and every custom connected with the tenure of land is a premium on bad farming. If the English farmer had a tenth part of the security of holding which the Irish farmer has, England would produce a vast deal more than under the present system.

J. B. ELLIS, WEST BARSHAM, WALSINGHAM, NORFOLK; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr. on corn is not of any use to the arable farmer. Should the 2s. per qr. be put on barley and not a corresponding duty on malt, I think our maltsters would soon establish maltings on the Continent. The 2s. duty on foreign barley would do more harm than good, as it would to a small extent raise the price of feeding barley with no corresponding rise in the price of our malting barleys.

FORM NO. 12,212. Farmer.

The corn duty will not be any advantage as there is always about 60 tons of bought feeding stuff consumed on the farm yearly. Of course if the milling industry was increased there would be more by-products got for cattle feeding.

J. C. DAWSON, NACTON, NEAR IPSWICH; Farmer.

How much dearer would corn be supposing Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion of a duty of 2s. per qr. was carried out? A duty of 2s. per qr. is not sufficient to stimulate wheat growing in this country. I grow annually an average of 1,500 qrs. of corn. If I got the full benefit of the duty (which is not at all likely) it would increase the value of my corn crop £150 per annum. Against that there would naturally be higher rents, dearer labour, and everything which I purchased would be dearer. I imagine if a duty of 2s. per qr. was imposed I might get, say, 1s. a qr. more for corn, this would mean only £75 more on my crop, and I should be in a worse position than I am at present.

H. POWELL, LLOEGR, BRECON; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal will be of no help to agriculturists. The land in this neighbourhood has been laid to permanent pasture, and I am certain it will not pay farmers to break up their pastures for the small gain proposed in his scheme. This district is eminently adapted for pasturing cattle and sheep, labour being so scarce and dear.

W. BARBER, MONIAIVE, DUMFRIES-SHIRE; Farmer.

To sheep farmers like myself a duty on corn, which would tend to raise the price, would be a distinct disadvantage. Of all the land I hold very little indeed would be used for growing corn to advantage even if corn were dear. Consequently, being more interested as a buyer than a seller of corn, the cheaper it is the better from my point of view.

T. USHER, COURTHILL, HAWICK, ROXBURGH; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr. on foreign grain, Colonial coming in free, would not of itself increase the price of our grain. Any rise in price we might hope for would come from better trade and more employment for the working men in this country.

R. POWELL COOPER, J.P., D.L., &C., LICHFIELD, STAFFS.; Farmer.

Practically no benefit, as I know that our importations will considerably increase and prices be lower than they are now. Canada will shortly be able to supply us with all we require.

T. DAVIES, NEEDWOOD, BEBINGTON, CHESHIRE; Farmer.

It will not affect me at all. Colonial corn will fill up the place of foreign, therefore giving me no benefit.

G. F. GAY, PORTON, SALISBURY, WILTS.; Farmer.

A 2s. corn duty would so encourage Canadian wheat production that the price would not rise and I should consequently reap no advantage, but a duty on imported manufactured articles (which you do not mention) would raise the price to us, as, unlike wheat, imported machinery would come from foreign sources (America) and we should have to pay more and receive no corresponding advantage. I am opposed to the scheme on this and other grounds.

J. CAHILL, BALLINGARRY, CO. TIPPERARY; Farmer.

At the present price of wheat the proposed duty would mean dearer bread, and directly or indirectly the farmer must provide that commodity for a good many outside his own household. So any advantage that would accrue even to the man that would grow wheat, and there would not be many at the present price, would be more than counterbalanced by the increased price of bread.

FORM No. 12,901. Farmer.

Directly it would not benefit me as I do not grow corn for sale. If milling increased, feeding stuffs such as bran, pollard, &c., might be cheaper than at present.

J. O'CARROLL, LISTOWEL, KERRY; Farmer.

It would not benefit me to any appreciable extent. It would help the milling industry, and as "Every mickle makes a muckle" it would help to prevent emigration. I am not quite satisfied that such a scheme would in the long run materially benefit British agriculturists. The Colonials contribute nothing towards the up-keep of the Army and Navy, neither do they admit British produce free, the customs tariff on British exports being, I understand, as high as 20%. I would much prefer protection all round. If it suited our purpose, reciprocal treatment with whom we pleased could follow.

H. HENDERSON, BALLYBRICK, RATHFRILAND, DOWN; Merchant.

In all cases whatever is charged on ours going out should be charged on theirs coming in. Free out and in would be better.

SIR W. PINK, SHROVER HALL, COSHAM, HANTS.; Farmer.

My rates average 3s. per acre and are increasing. The tithe is now about 4s. per acre, or a charge of about 7s. per acre, with land tax and manorial charges amounting in all to 8s. per acre. A duty of 3s. per qr. on foreign and 1s. on Colonial wheat, with corresponding duty on flour for both, would about equalise the charges we pay, that is the foreigner should contribute to place the English farmer in a fair position, 2s. 6d. on foreign barley and 2s. on oats, and the Colonial should contribute 2s. and 1s. 6d. respectively.

J. WILLINGTON, J.P., ST. KIERANS, BIRR, KING'S CO.; Farmer.

After the first 2 or 3 years our Colonies will be more than able to supply the whole requirements of Great Britain with wheat, meat and butter. Our land, with rent and taxes to pay, cannot compete with virgin land in the Colonies, which is practically free of rent and taxes. Unless there is a duty on Colonial corn of, say, 2s. a qr., and double that on non-Colonial corn, it will do our farmers no good whatever. Doubling the duty on flour is excellent. Cotton seed, linseed, flax and Indian corn should be allowed free. Unless a fair duty is imposed, we cannot pay agricultural labourers high enough wages to stop emigration, which is the cause of our country bleeding to death.

H. TALLENT, SWAFFHAM, NORFOLK; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr., with Colonial corn admitted free, would not be of any assistance to the English farmer. The surplus corn of any country must find its market here. We want a duty of 5s. on foreign and 2s. 6d. on Colonial corn.

J. SCOTT, HAWICK, ROXBURGH; Farmer.

I approve of Colonial produce and corn getting a preference, but I do not approve of them having an open door here if agriculture is to succeed. No doubt it will help the pastoral by helping the arable farmers. They will have more money to invest in lambs and ewes, but think 2s. over small.

H. T. HINCKS, WIGSTON HALL, LEICESTER; Farmer, Auctioneer.

As I sell off in each year 200 qrs. corn, the price would probably, under former conditions, be raised 1s. per qr.—profit to me, £10. The price of offals (milling) would be decreased, and help me in purchasing same. Linseed and cotton seed should come in free to benefit farmers. Colonial corn should have a duty of 2s. per qr., and foreign corn 4s. The corn I grow pays over 2s. per qr. in local and Imperial taxes, and charges on the land (apart from rent), such as land tax, tithe, &c.

1645

W. E. S. WILSON, FRIARS' HALL, HADLEIGH, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

If this duty raises the price of corn, it will, of course, help the agricultural industry, but if, on the other hand, the Colonies are able to take full advantage of this preference, the British farmer will reap no benefit, as the Colonies will supply England with corn instead of the Americans.

G. EAMES, LINCH FARM, MIDHURST, SUSSEX; Farmer.

Very little benefit, as Colonial corn will soon wipe out the gain. There should be a higher duty on foreign, say 5s. per qr., and 2s. 6d. on Colonial, wheat.

FORM NO. 12,264. Farmer.

2s. per qr. on foreign corn would not raise the price and therefore would be of no benefit to the British farmers, but I am of opinion that there should be 2s. on Colonial corn and 4s. on foreign corn, with extra on flour (being a manufactured article), and that maize should not be exempted.

ROBERT CRAIG, GRONDON PARK, STOCK, ESSEX; Farmer.

The above suggestion would likely do more harm than good to both the arable and the dairy farmer. The small duty of 2s. per qr. would not raise the price of corn, while the price of agricultural implements would be raised to the arable farmer, and the price of feeding stuffs would be raised to the dairy farmer. To be any benefit to British agriculture, in my opinion, a 10s. duty would be required so long as wheat was not over 40s. per qr., with a preference for Colonial produce of half that duty. The duty on flour should be so high that it would prevent its importation. The dairy farmers would then receive some little benefit by getting feeding offals more reasonably.

1646

CAPT. H. E. WALTERS, R.N., CAER-LLAN, MONMOUTH; Farmer.

As regards the duty on corn, the Colonies, by getting a preferential advantage, their supply may be expected to increase, but I doubt if prices would be materially strengthened or effect any appreciable assistance or benefit to the agricultural industry. The duty on flour, by giving substantial preference to the millers, should cheapen food stuffs, and tend to economy in feeding, and I am hopeful of considerable benefit therefrom.

FORM NO. 12,213. Farmer.

The duty suggested by Mr. Chamberlain must help us a little, though not sufficiently to make a fair profit, especially should the Colonies send in free. A 5s. duty should be put on all foreign corn other than from the Colonies, putting a duty on them of 2s. per qr., thereby giving them a preference of 3s. over other countries. We could then employ more labour at a higher wage than at present and pay an increased rent for our occupation, thereby giving the landlord a larger income, which he would use for building cottages, &c., and the general improvement of this estate.

1647

J. W. MARTIN, NORTH END PLACE, FELSTEAD, ESSEX; Farmer.

The importation of wheat, instead of flour, would cheapen offals used as feeding stuffs for cattle, and to this extent Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion would be an advantage. But in a few years Canada and Australia would probably take the place of the United States in the exportation of flour to Britain, and present conditions would once more prevail. So long as heavily taxed British land has to compete with foreign and Colonial lands, that are not taxed at all, so long will agriculture decline, and the British race continue to be driven from the country into the towns, the more especially as freights are cheaper for foreign and Colonial produce than for the British farmer. Common sense would suggest a duty on Colonial imports equal to the taxation paid by the British, and a preference given to the Colonist by doubling the duty to the foreigner.

F. MARTIN, HUBBERTS BRIDGE, BOSTON, LINCOLN; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are not of the slightest advantage to the British agriculturist, and what surprises me most is that British farmers say they are in favour of them. If Colonial corn is to be admitted free, we shall be much worse off in a few years' time than we are now, and why the Colonial producers should have the price of their produce increased to them by the amount the 2s. per qr. will raise it, I fail to see. Supposing Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are put in force, and they raise the price of corn grown in this country 1s. per qr., which is all they will do—and after a time not that amount, when the Colonies produce more, as they will as time goes on—what advantage will it be to the British farmer. Everything the English farmer has to buy (except maize, and it will be dearer in proportion as other things are raised in price) will be so much dearer, possibly not the full 2s. per qr., but very near it, and the only advantage he will gain will be the 1s. per qr. on the small amount of grain he produces. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals will be detrimental to the British agriculturist. Why admit Colonial corn free? Put 2s. on it and 5s. on all others.

1648

J. BRUCE, GAETLY, R.S.O., ABERDEENSHIRE; Farmer.

I would not receive much benefit from a duty of 2s. per qr. on corn grown in foreign countries. I am of opinion that there should be a duty on all grain imported, with a preference in favour of the Colonies. There certainly ought to be a duty, at all events, equal to the combined rates and taxes—i.e., school, parochial, and road rates, &c.—paid by the landlord and the tenant of the land. I can see little difference between these rates and a tax on food, as farmers produce nothing but food for the people, and imported stuff ought not to escape. The present system is in favour of the foreigner, and prejudicial to the home grower.

W. H. STILL, CASTLE HILL, ADDINGTON, SURREY; Farmer.

Very little. The weak spot, from an agricultural point of view, is the letting in Colonial produce free. By all means give it a preference over the foreigner, but it should pay something. The result of

the duty, as proposed, would, I am afraid, be to make cakes and other imported cattle foods dearer to buy, without appreciably raising the price of home-grown wheat.

P. WHEELER, BULLEY FARM, NEAR GLOUCESTER; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion is very good, and probably will benefit the English farmer indirectly. The duty in itself is nothing, but as soon as it is levied up goes bread, which makes the governing part of this country (the working man) grumble. We want a scale for the middleman to work from, but I fail to see where to commence. With due regard to our brothers across the water, I don't agree they should come free, considering the duty the home farmer pays. See how our bit of land is taxed to what theirs is. My opinion is, tax the foreigners who tax us, and give a preference to the Colonists with a minor tax. There ought to be a suggestion by Mr. Chamberlain not to raise the prices to consumer until the duty is enough to justify a rise, so as to keep the duty payable by the foreigner.

G. C. ALEXANDER, HUGLETT'S FARM, HEATHFIELD, SUSSEX; Farmer.

Considerable benefit, but feeding cakes, as raw material for manufacturers of beef and milk, should be free. Colonials should pay a tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ that charged to other countries.

J. BURGESS-ADAMS, THE MERE, ENVILLE, NEAR STOURBRIDGE, STAFFS.; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on foreign corn would scarcely benefit us at all, unless the duty so collected was applied so that we could get further relief under the Agricultural Ratings Act. I would suggest that Colonial corn pay 2s. per qr., foreign corn 4s.; and in the case of flour a heavier duty to correspond. All linseed, cotton seed, and maize should be admitted duty free.

G. W. RACKHAM, HILL FARM, HETHEL, NORWICH, NORFOLK; Farmer.

The duty on corn would raise sufficient money to greatly lessen our heavy taxation, and by helping the miller would find more work, and make feeding stuffs more plentiful and cheaper. Colonial corn should pay $\frac{1}{2}$ duty, so as to contribute something to the taxes.

J. MILNE, INVERURIE, ABERDEEN; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on grain would undoubtedly help agriculturists. The Colonies being free importers, it would probably increase the price of grain by 1s. to 1s. 6d. per qr. I have considered this question very carefully, and can see no reason why we should not grow all the wheat and barley we require, and think it is the first duty of our statesmen to see that the land is kept in cultivation. This could be so far accomplished by a duty of 3s. per cwt. on foreign grain, and 1s. 6d. on Colonial, and the non-agricultural public could be compensated by placing a duty or tax of 2s. to 5s. per acre on all permanent pastures, which at present are being used against the best interests of the nation. The maize which comes here competes directly with our oats for horses, and our barley for distillation, and as it is nearly all grown in foreign countries, there seems no reason why it should be admitted free any more than foreign barley. The duty on flour should be substantially higher than on wheat, as the grinding of wheat gives employment, and the offals are used for stock feeding. The duty of 1s. helped our milling business so long as it lasted, and much new machinery was put in, in the belief that it would continue. In our comparatively small mill (pearl barley and oatmeal) we pay yearly £160 for ground site, £160 in city taxes, besides for water, gas, electricity, coal, &c. Imported flour pays no taxes.

G. W. BIGGS, BELLEVUE, BORRISOKANE, TIPPERARY; Farmer.

I hope this tax will raise the price of all corns, unless our Colonies are able (as I think they are) to take the place of foreign producers. In any case, the tax will be welcomed in Ireland, and be a great boon if it raises the price of wheat. I think 1s. a qr. duty ought to be put on Colonial corn.

W. FRANKISH, CULME, ST. CATHERINE'S, LINCOLN; Farmer.

On such a farm as I had the proposed duty on corn would ultimately bring some advantage, but so small a duty cannot by itself materially raise the price of corn, particularly as corn is to come in free from the Colonies. On this I feel very strongly that unless the Colonies trade freely with us all round, they should be required to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ such duty, viz., 1s. per qr. Clearly, all ground stuffs (meals) should pay much heavier duties, firstly on account of the offals being for use in this country; and next, to give work to such men as would be employed in grinding. I fear our Colonies would be at a disadvantage in freights in competition with the United States, but this is probably a matter for consideration in arranging duties.

C. HOPE, DELVIN, WESTMEATH; Farmer.

If Colonial corn and flour is admitted free I cannot see how that would benefit me, for this country would become the dumping ground for the Colonies.

LIEUT.-COL. J. COUSSMAKER, WESTWOOD, NORMANDY, GUILDFORD, SURREY; Farmer.

The duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain will not in any way affect my farming operations. It may make the value of English wheat a little better, and if the milling industry be revived I may secure better offal for my pigs and poultry. At present there is no difficulty and the live stock flourish on what the corn chandlers supply. On Imperial grounds I advocate taxing foreigners, and giving advantage to Colonists in every possible way, putting lighter duties on their produce, but not to admit any article free.

H. W. BROUGHTON, MARSTON, OXFORD; Farmer.

As I have only a small quantity of arable land, any slight advance in price of corn would be of small benefit to me. At the same time I approve of a discrimination being made in favour of Colonial produce.

1653

J. RICHARDS, WOLVERTON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ; Farmer.

2s. per qr. would not induce one to put more land under the plough. From a farmer's point of view Colonial corn should pay a duty.

M. SANDFORD, ESTATE OFFICE, MARESFIELD PARK, NEAR UCKFIELD, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would benefit agriculture very much, but I should like to see a larger duty on imported flour whether coming from our Colonies or elsewhere. It would be better for the farmer if *all* wheat were taxed alike, but I can see it is most important to give all preference that is possible to the Colonies.

J. T. WALLER, CASTLETOWN, PALLASKENBY, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

2s. per qr. not enough if Colonial corn is admitted free.

G. DAVIDSON, BARNHILLS, MINTO, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

It is difficult to see how the proposed duty of 2s. is to benefit farmers, seeing that Colonial corn is to be admitted free. The foreigner will pay the duty on his surplus stocks.

LORD KESTEVEN, STAMFORD, Lincs. AND NORTHANTS. ; Farmer.

Duty would make no difference in price. It would be of no assistance whatever, except indirectly—it might cheapen and increase the supply of bran—and the amount obtained by the proposed tax might give relief from other taxation. Colonial corn ought to be taxed equally. The Colonies don't help to pay our taxes and heavy rates.

1654

FORM No. 12,852. Farmer.

I do not think the duty would be any assistance with Colonial corn admitted free.

G. F. DEEDES, HYTHE, KENT ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty would not make much difference so long as Colonial wheat came in free.

JOHN LAVERACK, NORTH CARLTON, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

The 2s. duty would be of advantage for revenue purposes. Duty on flour would cause oats to be cheaper and more plentiful for use of stock. Colonial corn admitted free would prevent any advance in prices of home-grown wheat, to the prejudice of consumer.

A. F. NICHOL, BRADFORD, BELFORD, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals would be of very little assistance so long as Colonial corn is admitted free. I think the Colonial corn should pay $\frac{1}{2}$ the duty of foreign corn. As it is, they have a decided advantage over British farmers, owing to the unfair way in which we are taxed and rated. It would be a good thing for farmers if the malt tax was re-imposed. I have been told on good authority that some millers send their by-products (bran, &c.), abroad to Denmark, &c., at £1 per ton less than they will sell to farmers in this country—simply to keep up the price.

1655

R. ONIONS, BORRIS, MARYBORO', QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

I highly approve of protective duties as named by Mr. Chamberlain, but cannot see any benefit would arise to the Irish agricultural industry if Colonial corn were admitted free. If the duty named were put on raw corn, with another amount on manufactured goods such as flour, beef, bacon, butter, &c., Irish farming industry would be greatly advanced, the labouring class employed, milling industries revived, and land now uncultivated would be again brought into requisition. In fact, a thorough revival of trade in all small as well as large industries would be the result, combined with purchase of land.

J. J. DAVIDSON, SAUGHTON MAINS, CORSTORPHINE, MIDLOTHIAN ; Farmer.

The proposed duty of 2s. per qr. on corn would not be of any benefit to the farmer, as it would not appreciably raise the price. Britain is the principal purchaser of wheat and the foreign grower could not send his grain to any other country on anything like such favourable terms as to Britain. With a 2s. import duty I therefore hold that the same quantity would come as formerly, unless it can be suggested that a 2s. duty would limit production on the other side. In my opinion, even a 5s. duty would not appreciably raise the price here, as the duty would be paid by the producer. If Colonial produce were admitted free it is all the more certain that the home price would not rise.

1656

G. T. HARRISON, HOLTON HALL, HOLTON ST. MARY, COLCHESTER ; Farmer.

I favour a duty on corn, except maize, and a duty on flour (rather higher than on corn) being imposed on all importations from whatever country they come. I would not admit Colonial corn free. Failing this, I would leave matters as they are now. In my opinion, with a duty on imported corn and flour, maize being admitted free, I could cultivate more land, do it better, feed more stock, and the country district would flourish once more. If Colonial corn is admitted free, and corn from other countries taxed, we should be worse off than we are now.

G. GOOD, ST. GILES, SALISBURY ; Farmer.

No benefit whatever in its present form. Should Mr. Chamberlain's proposed changes in the fiscal policy become law it would be a death blow to the already crippled state of agriculture. A 2s. per qr. duty on corn would not raise the price, as has been proved by the 1s. per qr. registration duty put on corn during the year 1902, and if corn is to be admitted free from our Colonies, a 2s. duty would be no advantage to the home grower, but an incentive to the Colonists to grow larger quantities and flood our markets still more. A

**1657 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Colonial Preference
—continued.

duty on flour would only benefit the miller and his employees, and the agriculturists would lose them as allies, therefore, if any changes are to be made in the fiscal policy of this country, the import duties placed on all commodities producible in this country should be fixed on an equitable basis.

DAVID HUME, THORNTON, BERWICK-ON-TWEED; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal is not calculated to be of much assistance or benefit to British agriculture. The duties proposed are too small to be appreciable by the British farmer, while the preference given to the Colonial farmer as against the foreigner may so stimulate Colonial production as to make competition with home produce in time even greater than it has been hitherto. I think the action of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme would be, so to speak, automatic. The higher foreign produce is taxed, the greater the stimulus to Colonial production—to the evident advantage of the Colonies. But I fail to see where the advantage to the British farmer comes in, so long as he has to bear his present burden of rates and taxes from which the Colonies are exempt. It would certainly be a help to the British farmer if these were paid out of the duties levied on the foreign producer. But that, so far, does not appear to form any part of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme.

J. HENDERSON, FENAGH HOUSE, BAGENALSTOWN; Farmer.

The benefit from suggested corn duty will be more apparent than real, as Canada is more able to flood British markets with her produce.

J. PINKERTON, SECON, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM; Farmer.

I favour all round protection on everything that can be successfully cultivated at home. I fail to see how farmers could benefit if Colonial corn is admitted free. It matters not to us if we are submerged by a flood of foreign produce whether the torrent flows in a Colonial channel or not. A general application of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme unhampered or unhindered by preferential rates would mean a benefit to the ordinary farmer, of fully half his rental. But by diverting the traffic through Canadian thoroughfares the change would not be a material benefit to us.

**Higher Duties
desired**

19 farmers express a general desire for higher duties than those proposed. Other answers are as follows:—

D. THOMSON, DUNAVENEY, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM; Farmer.

I consider the duty proposed so small, it is questionable if it would make any difference. I would have been pleased to see a duty proposed on foreign potatoes, as potatoes and oats are the principal crops for Ireland.

R. O. FIELDEN, PUCKERIDGE, STAFFS.; Farmer.

I do not consider the duty is enough to make any vast difference to prices as they seem entirely regulated by foreign supplies, and 2s. per qr. or about 1s. a bag would do very little to help, as no doubt freights would be cheaper from abroad to compensate. I should prefer cheap corn to cheap meat, as my output of meat is larger than that of corn. Of this produce I have hardly sold any the last 2 years having ground it at home for my own use.

A. B. HOLT, BROUGHTON GRANGE, NEAR BRIGG, LINCOLNSHIRE; Farmer.

A 2s. duty will not affect me much. Put a higher duty on corn and then it will make a difference to the British farmer. Foreigners can compete against us even with this 2s. duty. Millers prefer foreign wheats to British grown, they are generally stronger. Or else let your machinery come in free and put a duty on corn, this will make a great difference. Farmers can produce corn cheaper with cheaper implements, and if the duty will put prices up farmers will also get the benefit. Put a duty on the foreign beef trade, this will help much more than a duty on corn and food stuffs.

H. YORATH, MAESMAWE, TALYBONT-ON-USK, BRECONSHIRE; Farmer.

I do not think it would be any benefit, as it certainly would not pay to cut up good grazing land for a rise of 2s. per qr. in corn, and with wages at such a high price as they have been of late.

FORM No. 12,678. Farmer.

Owing to climatic conditions in Ireland corn will never be grown on a large scale, and the 2s. per qr. tax proposed by Mr. Chamberlain would not induce me to attempt it. Labour is getting scarcer and less efficient every year and even with an advance of 2s. per qr. in price I would not embark in tillage operations.

J. DEANE-WILLIS, BAPTON MANOR, CODFORD ST. MARY, WILTS.; Farmer.

I do not consider such a small tax any use. It is not enough to make corn pay for growing, is just enough to make bakers raise price of bread, consequently labourers would ask for more money. Bakers only would profit by a small tax like this. In all probability feeding stuffs would be a little dearer. Most farmers consume more feeding stuffs than they sell corn, so personally I cannot see a small tax like this would be any good, unless it was the thin edge of the wedge for taxing everything imported, in such a way as to derive substantial income and so reduce taxation in its present form.

FORM No. 12,493. Farmer.

It would be an advantage if the duty were to raise the price sufficiently to make the wheat worth growing.

FORM No. 12,405. Farmer.

Owing to the smallness of the duty and the large supply to be admitted free the benefit would be trivial, as the increase in price would be almost imperceptible and not sufficient to induce anyone to recommence corn growing if already abandoned as profitless.

1658

1659

1660

1661

T. F. HANCOCK, BROOM HALL, SUNNINGDALE, ASCOT; Farmer.

Not any as regards prices of corn, the duty not being high enough, and I don't believe 2s. a qr. will make any difference to the price, but a duty on flour I think will much benefit English farmers as tending to increase the employment of English mills, and allowing bran and other offals to be obtained more cheaply. Bran, &c., is invaluable on such a farm at this, for instance, as being a good produce not only of more milk, but of better quality also.

J. W. SMITH, THINGHILL COURT, HEREFORD; Farmer.

This small duty on corn will not be of much material advantage to the farmer. In this county we have so altered our mode of management that the best farmers buy more corn for the production of meat than they sell, and this has a tendency to enrich rather than to exhaust the land by frequent corn growing.

J. WHALEY, ANNSBORO, ROBERTSTOWN, NAAS, KILDARE; Farmer.

The actual 2s. would not be of much benefit any further than that it might make more wheat and corn be manufactured in this country, and farmers would be able to get cheaper offal than at present.

W. W. KEEL, STANTON DEEW, BRISTOL, SOMERSET; Farmer.

Very little, and the average dairy farmer will get but little benefit, as he buys 50 % more than he sells, and the proposed 2s. per qr. is not inducement enough to warrant him to get into cultivation for corn the old bastard leys that have been allowed to get into their present state through agricultural depression.

1662

R. H. MACKESSACK, NEWTON OF STREUTHERS, FORRES, ELGIN; Farmer.

The duties proposed are so small that I do not think they would benefit farmers to any appreciable extent. If a protective duty is to be imposed at all maize ought to be included.

T. GARLAND, ARDLETHEN, ELLON, ABERDEENSHIRE; Farmer.

I consider that the benefit to the farmer will just be the 2s. per qr. which is put on as duty. In my opinion 2s. per qr. over present prices is not enough to make it a paying business to cultivate land that only produces 4 to 5 qrs. per acre.

S. W. FOX, HUMBERSTONE, LEICESTERSHIRE; Farmer.

It is impossible for a duty of 2s. per qr. on corn to be of any real advantage to us, it is not enough to make a profit on growing it. A duty on flour would give us a double advantage by making offals cheaper.

J. A. BORTHWICK, OXNAM ROW, JEDBURGH, ROXBURGHSHIRE; Farmer.

Would be of some small assistance, but to be of any substantial good would require to be 6s.

J. RILEY, PUTLEY COURT, LEDBURY, HEREFORD; Farmer.

1663

A 2s. duty is not enough. The duty on flour should be far more in proportion, in order to get all the grinding done here for the sake of the offals. The duty on corn on my farm would be no advantage to me, but the duty on flour would be a great advantage, as I am now a stock farmer and want cheap feeding stuff, bran in particular.

A. C. MARRIAGE, PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE; Farmer.

A 2s. duty is not of any benefit to the farmer, as he would have to pay more for feeding stuffs and offals. 2s. for corn is not high enough, and especially for flour, as we should not get any of the offals from the flour sent here. We should also have to pay more for our implements. In fact I cannot see how a farmer is benefited, except 1s. or 2s. on his wheat, of which he grows very little now, and it will not be enough to induce him to grow more.

FORM No. 12,447. Farmer.

2s. per qr. upon foreign barley is not nearly sufficient. Foreign flour should pay 5s. per sack to benefit the British farmer.

B. J. HODGSON, LEYBURN, YORKSHIRE; Farmer.

On my farm the duty of 2s. per qr. on wheat would not enhance the value sufficient to pay for growing. If we could have a sliding scale so that the price was kept up to 5s. per bushel more wheat would be grown, and it would pay me to grow it at that price.

1664

COUNCILLOR J. KENDRICK, J.P. (Chairman Staffordshire Chamber of Agriculture), STONE PARK, STONE, STAFFORDSHIRE; Farmer.

It would assist arable farmers a little, but would require more than double that amount to get much of the land into corn-growing again. Flour ought to be taxed quite double as much as corn, so that the British farmer might get offals at a reasonable price.

E. VINSON, HIGHCROFT HALL, SWANLEY, KENT; Farmer.

To benefit agriculture you want to put a higher duty on wheat, say 10s. per qr. Years ago, when wheat made from 50s. to 60s., we grew only a quantity. Now only for straw.

FORM No. 12,265. Farmer.

The 2s. duty on wheat will be but very little help, as it is not enough to make any difference. I say if the foreigner produces enough to feed half the people in this country, he should be taxed on all he sends equal to pay half our taxation.

W. FENNELL, RATHSIDE, BALLYTORE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I consider that at least 4s. per qr. would be necessary to revive wheat-growing in Ireland, but of course I would be glad to see any duty on the foreigner, however small, as he is ruining Irish farming all along the line. Finally, the sooner we have some protection the better, as, if years of glut in the cattle, &c., trade like the past go on, and they seem certain to, the Irish mixed or tillage farmer may start to those countries, which are surely, and mind you, not too slowly ruining him.

E. B. TORR, INSTOW, N. DEVON ; Farmer.

By all means put 8s. per qr. on wheat, 2s. is some good but not enough to stimulate the growth of wheat and give employment on the land. We know that he who sends the most grain to Mark Lane sends the most meat to Smithfield, and to do this labour must be employed. Flour should be heavily taxed. We want the grain brought here to give millers work, and we should get the offal. I would admit all feeding grain and stuffs free.

C. A. WEBB, QUARTERTOWN, MALLOWS, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

I thoroughly approve of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, but do not think that they go far enough. It would tend to benefit the farmer, but so small a duty would come entirely out of the pocket of the foreigner, as it did a year ago when the small duty was enforced. Being a miller and corn merchant I know something of the trade, and am positive a small duty of the kind would not be felt by the householder in this country. A large sum in duty would accrue to the Exchequer, thereby diminishing the excessive taxation of the farmer.

E. BRIDGER, WINCHFIELD, HANTS ; Farmer.

2s. would not be enough to make any difference. I most certainly think maize should not be exempt, as the cheap maize keeps the price of our corn down now.

FORM No. 12,291. Farmer.

No benefit to me. Put 10s. per qr. duty on corn and let the farmer have power to purchase his farm, and Government lend them money at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ repayable in 30 years.

C. LAKE, OAKLEIGH, HIGHAM, KENT ; Farmer.

The 2s. duty proposed on corn is so absurdly low that it can do but little good to British agriculture, and will not be nearly enough to make the farmers increase their corn area. With a 5s. duty on wheat and 10s. duty on flour, agriculture would boom again, and all our mills, employing many thousands, would once more be opened and started, and the offals from these would be of enormous advantage to farmers. A 2s. duty, with a corresponding rise in the price of foreign oats, cake and all machinery, will place farmers in a far worse plight than they are at present.

ALDERMAN J. T. HARRISON, J.P., THE POPLARS, BUCKINGHAM ; Farmer.

Of course 2s. extra in the price of wheat would not save the farmer. What is wanted is 40s. per qr. of 8 bushels measure, 62 lbs. weight per bushel. This the consumer could pay easily, while the producer could employ a fair amount of labour at a living wage for same, and himself. In 1864 to 1879 there were employed on the average all the year round in Water Stratford parish (5 farms) 30 able-bodied agricultural labourers—now there are 7.

G. ADAMS, ROYAL PRIZE FARM, WADLEY HOUSE, FARINGDON, BERKS. ; Farmer.

I quite agree with it, but think the duty should be higher, 5s. on wheat and 7s. 6d. on flour, so as to keep the mill work in this country, the offal for the labourer's pig and the farmer's, and to pay the wear and tear on the roads which have been considerably damaged for many years by bearing over them the foreign produce free of cost. Every beast and sack of corn I grow has to bear a duty to maintain the roads. It will be best for oil and cotton cakes to come in free of all duty as they are chiefly used for making beef, mutton, milk and all dairy produce, but have a duty on maize, which is mostly used by millers, brewers, and all town-kept horses, and for making beer and spirits, and but very little used by the labourers or the farmers.

W. G. HUMPHREYS, OWLSWICK MANOR, RISBORO', BUCKS. ; Farmer.

A duty of 2s. per qr. would not be of the slightest benefit to the farmer as regards any increase in the price of corn, as, under existing circumstances, nothing less than an increase of 10s. per qr. can help him. But I believe that a duty on flour would be beneficial, as the offals could then be sold in this country. I found that during the time of the imposition of the corn duty in 1902-3 I was able to buy bran considerably cheaper and also better. This proposed duty would not have the least effect on the price of bread, as the same, or an increased, quantity of wheat would still be grown, and would be sent to the market with the least tariff.

H. T. ALLISON, STANGHOW, SKELTON-IN-CLEVELAND, YORK ; Farmer.

It would benefit me very much, but it ought to be 5s. duty on corn grown in foreign countries. If flour was taxed more heavily it would be a means of getting more corn into our country, give more employment to our mills, and get the offals for home consumption.

T. L. DODD, COTTON HALL, CHESTER ; Farmer.

The duty is much too low to be felt by anyone either as a benefit or otherwise, except that the amount collected may ease the rates or reduce the national debt. I should like to see it 10s. instead of 2s.

H. TOON, GREENHILL FARM, STONE, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

The duty on corn as suggested by Mr. Chamberlain does not appear to me to be of any advantage to farmers generally. In my opinion a prohibitive duty on all foreign flour would be of the greatest benefit

to farmers, as also to the country at large. (1) The farmer would have the offals from wheat, which, as bran and sharps, are such important foods for all classes of young stock (indeed for stock of all ages), at very much lower prices. This would enable him to rear and feed more stock to the benefit of the community at large. (2) If country mills could again be worked profitably it would at any rate be the means of keeping our rivers in a better state than they are now. What I mean is, since so many mills on our rivers have ceased to work the rivers are not kept so clean, and the water is not conserved, so that after a few weeks without rain our small rivers get very low.

E. PIGG, JUNR., FURNEAUX PELHAM, BUNTINGFORD, HERTS. ; Farmer.

The duties suggested on corn and flour are not sufficient to benefit the farmer to any extent. To do that they ought not to be less than 1s. per cwt. on wheat, barley and oats, and 2s. per cwt. on flour. There should certainly be an extra duty on the flour so that we can have the advantage of the milling offals for our stock. Imported hay and straw should have 20 % duty placed upon it, as it is impossible to sell it at anything like a paying price owing to foreign competition; and all farmers in Herts., Essex and Cambs. make it a rule to sell a portion of their hay and straw and buy linseed and cotton cakes and other feeding stuffs, and it is to their advantage to do so if they could but make a fair profit on their hay. I also consider artificial manures should be admitted duty free.

J. MILLS WHITE, CIRENCESTER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE ; Farmer.

It may stimulate the price of wheat a little, and ought to be increased to prevent the price ever going down to less than 10s. per sack, as a few years ago. This put hundreds of acres of heavy wheat land out of cultivation, and yet the price of bread did not correspond, but kept at 4d. per loaf, whereas years ago it was always sold at 5d. per loaf, when wheat was at 20s. per sack, and at 6d. per loaf when wheat was at 24s. per sack, at which prices it may be grown at a profit. Then the labourers used to say they never wanted to see it less than 6d. per loaf. I consider the preference to the miller would be a great boon, as we should get the offals cheaper and fresher and close at hand—a great advantage both in rearing young stock and making beef—instead of giving the same price for them, as we sometimes sell the wheat for. The local miller is always the best customer and gives the highest price for our wheat, because he has no carriage to pay, as we deliver it into the mill and load back with offal; besides, the men working in village mills have boys to work on the farms.

FORM NO. 12,206. Farmer.

The duty on corn suggested by Mr. Chamberlain is not so much as I should like to see, and although it will not bring affluence to men of my class, it will undoubtedly help us materially to pass through a period of great agricultural depression.

P. STACK, FERMOY, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

We want protection without delay. If something is not done we cannot exist as farmers. Look at the resources of America, are they not greater than the resources of England, and we are obliged to pay for protecting them while disposing of their farm produce in our markets? 2s. per qr. duty on corn will give us some help, but I would be in favour of having 4s. per qr. put on flour, as we want a home market for our wheat, and also to encourage home labour. All the flour mills in this district are idle.

CARY COLES, WINTERBOURNE STOKE, SALISBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

I doubt whether a 2s. duty per qr. on corn is sufficient to be of much advantage, to stimulate corn or growing very much. A duty on flour would be of considerable benefit, as whilst equal to the duty on corn on the grain sold, it would also, by improving the milling industry, be the means of more wheat being ground and offals produced, to the advantage of stock breeders.

R. GORMAN, NEWTOWN KELES, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

2s. duty on wheat is no benefit, as less than 25s. per barrel would not pay, but a duty of 3s. per barrel on foreign barley and 5s. per barrel on foreign malt is the proper duty, as it won't increase the price of bread. If you look at the Independent Report of the Licensing Commission of 1898, the cost of brewing material was only half what it was 25 years before. But you may say, there is a lot of land won't grow barley, but I say there are thousands of acres with the aid of proper artificial manure that will grow it, where a farmer would not think of getting it 20 years ago. Then the more is set the better price will be got for oats.

R. HEMPHILL, J.P., KILLENAULE, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

Any duty would be better than none, but 2s. appears to be much too little. Anything less than 5s. would not effect any improvement in farming in this country. I would not tax maize, linseed oil, cake or cotton cake.

A. SATCHWELL, CREGGS, CO. ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

Of course the proposal will be of great assistance to all the agricultural industry in this country, it could not be otherwise. The Irish farmer cannot compete with the foreigners at present. Agricultural industry must come to a standstill. Everything from America and other countries can be sold cheaper. Consequently all or nearly all the mills are closed, and so much the worse for all concerned—the farmer who has corn to sell and the labourer who has wages to earn. Of course some say it brings cheap food to the poor, but when the poor have no money to buy cheap food, what good is it to them? The duty on corn would at once cause a very large increase in agricultural industry. Better prices for the farmer, better wages for the labourer, and consequently a more contented and prosperous country in every way. I am afraid 2s. a qr. is hardly enough.

1673 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour

Higher Duties
desired
—continued.

THOS. MOLYNEUX, J.P., THE DECOY, DUNLAVIN, CO. WICKLOW; Farmer.

I think the duty of 2s. per qr. is too little on corn, and especially flour, as the corn would give employment to a large number of mills and their employees, and would give a lot of offal in the way of pollard, bran, &c., to farmers at a reduced price to feed their stock with.

J. GILLAIRS, DUCHESS FARM, ST. OSYTH, ESSEX; Farmer.

A very slight benefit. A duty should be put on wheat in the sliding scale, so that it should never be less than 40s. per qr. and when above that, taken off—a duty on flour so as to give preference to English miller, and farmer would have benefit of millers' bran, &c. Barley is as much a staple crop as wheat, and beer should be made entirely from malt and hops, and no tied public houses and monopolies—fair competition in this as everything else.

H. KIDD, ARLES, CO. CARLOW; Farmer.

I think the proposed duty on corn too small to be of any use; it would never induce farmers with land suitable for grass to till. Farmers might derive some benefit from the offal being made in the country, but the benefit, if any, would be more than counteracted by a probable increase in wages caused by the advance in price of bread.

W. DEADY, JERPOINT, THOMASTOWN, KILKENNY; Farmer.

Enable me to meet my engagements easier by getting a better price. I consider 2s. per qr. not enough.

A. B. CHIBNALL, BIDDENHAM, BEDFORD; Farmer.

2s. per qr. duty on corn is not enough; it ought to be 4s., and 6s. on flour. I think it is a sorry sight to see the country villages decimated, farmers more or less ruined, and labourers driven into the towns because it does not pay to grow corn at present prices, and the country sending millions of money abroad to employ foreign labourers and our own men out of work—labour is more than plentiful in this neighbourhood. I wish the towns could be brought to see that it would be better for them if the villages were more prosperous.

E. AVERILL, KING'S BROMLEY, LICHFIELD, STAFFS.; Farmer.

Very little, if any. I am of opinion that if a duty on corn is to be of any benefit to the agricultural industry it should not be less than 5s. per qr.

A. ILES, PARK VIEW, FAIRFORD, GLOS.; Farmer.

To the very greatest extent one can imagine, but 2s. per qr. is inadequate. In this neighbourhood the extensive importation of foreign malting barley is damaging us as much as that of wheat. The late corn tax was quite a step in the right direction; it put fresh heart into the British farmer, showing him that his interests were being considered, and it did no one any harm. Foreign flour ought to be taxed heavily, for offals are scarcely to be obtained.

H. GEORGE, KIMPTON HALL, WELWYN, HERTFORDSHIRE; Farmer.

The duty on corn at 2s. per qr. is very low, and if altered to 5s. per qr., and the amount of such duty expended for the benefit of the farmer by taking the present tax off his produce in the form of local charges on his raw material—namely, the land he occupies, which at the present time is most unfairly assessed—I am inclined to think a 5s. per qr. duty would increase the price of corn about 1s. to 2s. per qr.

COL. R. G. COSBY, J.P., D.L., STRADBALLY HALL, QUEEN'S CO.; Farmer.

A little, more or less, but would approve of 5s. a qr. instead of 2s. I am in favour of reciprocity or fair trade, taxing everything (except maize) from foreign countries that tax us, exempting our own Colonies.

W. V. K. STENNING, J.P., HATSFORD, EAST GRINSTEAD, SUSSEX; Farmer.

The price of bread is so high compared with wheat values that 5s. duty should not be too much.

FORM No. 12,446. Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposals do not go far enough to benefit agriculture, for if the price of wheat was raised the full 2s. per qr. it would then be far short of the price at which it pays to grow it.

FORM No. 12,396. Farmer.

The duty on corn should not be less than 5s., and on flour manufactured in foreign countries more.

R. FRANK WOODCOCK, FEESFIELD, DISS, NORFOLK.

The proposed duty will do no good at all; it is not half enough. It allows the middleman an excuse to raise price and sell at an enormous profit.

T. J. SHIRLEY, KILLS, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

No good, except you put 3s. per barrel on foreign barley, and 5s. on foreign malt.

C. FILE, ELHAM, CANTERBURY, KENT; Farmer.

Not the slightest. 1s. per qr. did not help us, and I fail to see where a 2s. duty will. Put 6s. on wheat and 12s. on flour, and then the agricultural and milling industries would both flourish again in this country.

J. H. POWER, CARRICK-ON-SUIR, CO. TIFPERARY; Farmer.

The duty of 2s. per qr. is so small it would not be much inducement to grow corn, labour is so scarce and high.

1674

1675

1676

A. MURPHY, DRUMLEGAGH P.O., Co. TYRONE ; Farmer.

1677

In my opinion, the proposed duty is too low ; however, the above duty would help the community a little—I mean farmers and millers.

S. & W. TODD, LISBURN, ANTRIM ; Farmers.

We think it will considerably help to encourage the growth of corn, but in our opinion it is rather little. We are not only farmers, but dealers in farm produce, and have a fair idea of how farmers have been crushed out of the home markets by foreign competition. We think that cattle and beef should not be exempt either, as cattle rearing is an important part of the Irish farmers' work.

ARTHUR F. PARTRIDGE, WHARTON COURT, LEOMINSTER ; Farmer.

The 2s. duty is too small to benefit us. It is not high enough to make it profitable to plant more corn, as only enough corn is grown by me for straw, wheat and oats for my horses and barley for pigs, &c. I remember wheat at 8s. a bushel, bread 6d. to 6½d. a loaf, and now wheat is 2s. 6d. to 3s. 3d. a bushel and bread 5d. a loaf.

G. R. MACKESSACK, ARDGYE, ELGIN ; Farmer.

The proposal would be of some benefit, but 5s. would be better.

1678

R. F. WOODCOCK, LONGPARISH, HANTS ; Farmer.

The proposed duty will do no good at all ; it is not half enough. The middleman paying 2s. per qr. can raise the price per lb., and if only a trifle will return to him, double and treble the 2s. Put a heavy duty on flour from foreign countries, not Colonies, to get the offal over here. Good duty on all, from lands not Colonies, half duty from Colonies. A duty on imports better than bounty-fed corn lands in England.

G. JACK, COLINTON, MIDLOTHIAN ; Farmer.

I quite agree with Mr. Chamberlain's proposal, except that the tax should be 4s., instead of 2s. That there should be a duty of 20s. per ton on imported potatoes, and that the duty on potatoes exported to America (States) should be reduced to 20s.

A. B. LEITCH, ALVES, FORBES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

The 2s. proposed by Mr. Chamberlain is quite inadequate to be of any benefit to the home producer, and I would suggest a much higher duty on the flour. The admitting of maize free would be against the farmer in this district. This being a barley-growing county, we take a great interest in malt whisky, which we would like to see sold for what it is, and not mixed with raw grain as at present. The maize, being free, encourages the manufacture of raw grain spirits, which materially affects the price of barley. I am in favour of a preference being given to the Colonies.

1679

D. CUNNINGHAM, DALACHY, ABERDOUR, FIFESHIRE ; Farmer.

I cannot see that 2s. per qr. duty on corn would do much good ; it would require to be 5s. I would treat the Americans as they treat us (they can't do without our markets). Tax everything they send us till they are ready to admit free of tax anything we send them. Our Colonies before long, with their huge importations of grain, will be as hard on our home agriculture as the Americans are at present, and that will be another problem for Mr. Chamberlain in the near future.

W. PUDDPHATT, CHESHAM, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ; Farmer.

I have a mill as well as a farm. 2s. per qr. is no good to the farmer. The last tax Mr. Ritchie put on did not raise the price on English wheat 1d. Nothing less than 5s. or 10s. is any good to the farmer, though it may help the miller and the buyer of offals in this country. Foreign flour has killed all the small millers, and has given some of the big ones a good shaking. A dealer will sell foreign flour at the station at 6d. to 9d. per sack profit. What can the English miller get after that ?

E. BYRNE, RATHVILLY, CARLOW ; Farmer.

I would not gain much, if any, from such a duty, the amount being altogether too small to make it profitable to grow corn ; present produce, labour hire, and taxes, &c., &c., considered. What I suggest would be such a duty on imported wheat, barley and oats as would run the prices of the home corn to sell year in, year out, at, say, wheat 21s. per brl. (20 stone), barley 17s. per brl. (16 stone), oats 14s. per brl. (14 stone). As to wheat, from my point of view, I would just as soon see all the wheat possible admitted free, provided the other two crops sold at above rate. I thoroughly agree that Protection is the only hope for our country in future, along with a thorough-going reform in railway and other rates.

1680

FORM No. 12,724. Farmer.

Not heavy enough. I remember when every field in the small farmer's possession was tilled with wheat, oats, potatoes, and other crops. Not a field between this and Limerick (12 miles) but was in tillage, except the craggy, stony land that could not be tilled, and the deep meadows. Now all is in pasture, except small pieces of land.

D. DRENAN, KELLS, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

In order to allow the Irish farmers to live, everything coming from foreign countries should be taxed. I think 2s. per qr. too little on corn and too little on flour also.

J. C. MCKAY, PALLAS HOUSE, BEAUFORT, KERRY; Farmer.

Any measure putting a small duty on foreign corn would be a benefit to the farmers of Ireland. It would give them a chance of getting a price for their produce, which at present they are unable to get, and enable them to work their land, and give employment to men who under present circumstances have to seek a living in foreign countries, leaving only the old and decrepit at home to be a burden on the rates. It would be advisable to put a larger duty on made flour than on corn, so that we would have a chance of getting the bran for consumption, instead of having the foreigner get the benefit of it, as he is getting at present, and also giving a chance to Irish millers. The only fault I find with Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion is, that the duty of 2s. per qr. is not sufficient.

J. WILLIAMS, TULLOW LODGE, THOMASTOWN, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

The sum of 2s. per qr. is not sufficient to encourage people to break up the land, it would hardly cover the increased price of labour. Admitting maize free is quite proper as it is used freely for feeding purposes, particularly pigs and fowls, and I understand people in other parts of the country use it largely for food. You will see that I am not interested in corn-growing, but would like to see a lot of the land that people now call grass, ploughed, as it is hardly able to pay taxes in its present state. The other way it would give employment, keep the people at home, and have some one to eat the produce, instead of trying to send all to the English and Scotch markets.

J. A. COOPER, INSCH, ABERDEEN; Farmer.

To a very small extent because Colonial corn will equalise the effect. I would suggest a sliding scale of duty, from 1s. to 5s. according to the price of corn at the time, in fairness to consumer and producer.

G. A. FRASER, LONESOME FARM, NEAR REIGATE, SURREY; Farmer.

2s. per qr. on corn is of no use at all to the British farmer (especially if the duty is put on Colonial and foreign machinery), as, if it is intended by so doing to throw more land back into cultivation, it would be necessary to plough up some of the old men to come and do the work, for on stiff clay the difficulty would be to find the men who are capable of dealing with, or treating such land.

W. E. WILLIAMS, CORWEN, MERIONETH; Farmer.

All Colonial produce should be admitted free of duty. Charge the foreigner 5s. per qr. on grain and a corresponding duty on flour and other products which our Colonies can supply; also 5% *ad valorem* duty on beef and mutton, dead or alive. We shall benefit to the extent of money paid by the foreigner to the British exchequer, thereby relieving the British taxpayer, and making larger grants in aid of local rates which are unfairly heavy on land. As a farmer I do not ask for "protection," for I do not think that even a 5s. duty on corn will materially increase the price of wheat, there are plenty of other countries in the world where the climate is better adapted to growing wheat than the British Isles; they will grow sufficient for the whole world and they must cash it even though they have to pay duty before they can put it upon our markets. I am willing to supply the Committee with any information I possess that may lead to the overthrow, or at any rate the reformation, of the present iniquitous one-sided system of "free trade" (?) which enables the foreigner to have a free market here, whereas he protects his own trade by almost prohibitive duties on our goods before we are allowed to place them on his market. Where does justice and fair play come in here? Our Colonies and possessions in all parts of the world can supply us with all we require. Reciprocity is what is needed, fair trade, not free trade which at present enables the foreigner to dump his refuse, including paupers, on our shores. The ordinary consumer derives no benefit; it is the senders to our free markets—the creators of false crop reports and the gamblers in futures, cotton, corn, &c., who rule the markets and cause dislocation of trade.

FORM NO. 12,123. Farmer.

The duty of 2s. per qr. on corn would be of no benefit to farmers in this district—nothing less than 5s. per qr. would help them. As to flour, I cannot speak with authority, but millers are not doing badly under present conditions. The admission of Colonial produce free would be a serious disadvantage to our agriculturists, who pay rent, rates and taxes, whereas in the Colonies there are no such burdens on the land.

T. E. SMITH, KNEBWORTH, HERTS.; Farmer.

The duty as proposed is not enough, and it should be 5s. per qr. on corn and 4s. per sack on flour. At present the Colonies do not seem to propose corresponding concessions on our exports; this should be insisted on.

W. B. BLUNDELL, THE STOCKING FARM, LEICESTER; Farmer.

2s. per qr. is not enough to make corn production profitable; in fact, with Colonial corn coming in free, 2s. per qr. will have very little effect upon our prices. Flour and any other imported agricultural produce that can be called a manufactured article should be treated as such and charged a 10% to 15% duty.

T. A. McREYNOLDS, KING'S MILLS, STEWARTSTOWN, CO. TYRONE; Farmer.

I think this proposal would be of great advantage to farmers. I think, however, the duty on foreign corn should be higher, commencing at 2s. per qr. for the first year, and rising automatically every year for, say, 5 years. The duty on flour should give the millers of this country a very substantial preference, in fact should be prohibitive as soon as the milling plant of the United Kingdom is fit to cope with the requirements of the country; thus giving a large amount of employment in this country, besides having the offal for feeding purposes. Colonial corn should be admitted free, and flour from the Colonies subject to the same duty as foreign.

1685

J. BELL, ARTANA, DROMARA, Co. DOWN; Farmer.

As the farmers of America and other foreign countries with better land, better climate, and no rent, can supply us with all sorts of grain and bread stuffs at little more than half the price at which the farmers in Ireland can afford to produce them, a duty of 2s. per qr. would be of no use whatever in enabling the Irish farmer to compete with the foreigner. To do this would require a duty of 4s. per cwt. on wheat, 2s. per cwt. on oats, and 2s. per cwt. on barley—a duty which no Government would think of or dare impose. A small duty, such as that proposed, would injure the farmers of Ireland, as their food as well as that of the people generally comes from America, and would therefore increase the cost of living without any corresponding advantage, and would cause their rents to be increased in the Land Courts, as rents are fixed upon prices alone without taking cost of production into account. As Ireland is fast changing from an agricultural to a grazing country, and must eventually be a grazing country; as the working population will soon all have gone from rural places, making cultivation impossible, therefore cheap bread stuffs for man, and cheap feeding for cattle is what is best for Ireland. I fail to see if wheat be taxed same as flour how the home miller would reap any advantage.

FORM No. 12,057. Farmer.

I do not think the 2s. duty will assist me. I hope to see a higher duty or bounty of, say, 5s., and slightly heavier duty on flour. If it was possible, I should like to see agricultural wages fixed by the price of bread. The local authority to fix the price of bread. Perhaps 5d. a loaf might be the medium with wages (ordinary day wages) at 12s. and 6d. a week increase or decrease for every ½d.

1686

G. F. KENT, TERRYGLASS, BORRISOKANE, TIPPERARY; Farmer.

It will encourage the small farmer with a family to continue tilling. But I fear the labour question will prevent men like me at present taking advantage of Mr. Chamberlain's grand proposal. He does not go far enough for us, about 4s. per qr. would restart the plough, the labourer would receive a wage in proportion to what mill hands are receiving and be contented with his lot, which he is not at present. I tell you if you give us a home Parliament, one of the first acts it would pass would be a protective tariff, the most drastic and far-reaching on the face of the earth. I am not a Home Ruler.

F. R. JACKSON, KILKEA HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, Co. KILDARE; Farmer.

2s. per qr. is good enough to begin with, but the country wants something more substantial in the way of putting price up as an inducement to farmers to till more. The population in Ireland cannot increase if tillage be not materially increased, and tillage will not increase unless the price of produce is such as to encourage it. There are 6 flour mills on a stream or small river close to my farm, all within a stretch of 6 miles; these 40 years ago were all working and giving good employment, and to-day only 1 of the 6 is a working concern and struggling for an existence. This applies to all Ireland. Mills everywhere are idle and many in ruins, the industry killed by unfair foreign competition.

R. F. WOODCOCK, HASLEMERE, SURREY; Farmer.

Not enough to benefit at all. 10s. duty on wheat from foreign lands, not Colonies. 2s. duty on wheat from Colonies. Same on flour. A small duty no good whatever, it allows the middleman an excuse to raise the price 50 to 150 % more than the duty comes to. The duty is paid on per qr. The increase is paid on small amounts.

1687

J. WATT, CARLISLE; Farmer.

It is a decided advantage. A 2s. duty will encourage more grinding and therefore produce more feeding stuff at a cheaper rate for fattening stock. Think the duty should not be less than 5s. on all imported grain. Canada will doubtless give us all the wheat required eventually, but meantime it will encourage nations to reduce their tariffs and enable us to deal with them on better terms.

J. STUART, GARSTANG, LANCs.; Farmer.

The proposed duty, 2s. per qr., would not materially benefit the farmer except as a source of revenue. A duty of 5s. per qr. on foreign, and 2s. per qr. on Colonial corn would benefit him slightly.

B. E. NICHOLLS, BILLINGHURST, SUSSEX; Farmer.

A 2s. per qr. duty on corn would not induce me to increase my acreage of arable land. A duty which would raise the price to 40s. per qr. would be required to do this. I should be strongly in favour of a substantial preference to the miller in order to give the farmer a chance to buy offals and get his corn ground and crushed. The milling industry here is going the way of most other country industries at present, owing to the free import of flour.

1688

T. PRYOR, ARRINGTON, ROYSTON, CAMBS.; Farmer.

I think a 2s. per qr. duty on corn is just what ought to be done. 4s. would be better if we could get it, of course excepting maize. Personally I am not in favour of admitting Colonial corn free. That may benefit us as farmers for a while, but there can be no doubt that the undeveloped agricultural resources of the Colonies when properly developed are something enormous. When that development takes place, and Colonial corn is admitted free, I don't see but what, from a corn grower's point of view, the second stage of our disease will be more acute than the first. What is the difference to me, as a farmer, whether I am swamped with Colonial corn or foreign. I quite believe in Mr. Chamberlain's statement that if corn is taxed it will not raise the cost of living to the labouring class. Bread is very cheap now, consequently with the majority of the working class it is wasted. Some of this waste to which I refer comes under my own personal observation, and I feel convinced if they had to pay a little more for their bread what is now permitted to go to waste would be utilised. I sell about 300 qrs. of corn annually. If I could obtain only 2s. per qr. more for that amount, it would mean a sum of £30, sufficient to turn a small loss into a profit.

W. HIPWELL, SHARNBROOK, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

I have calculated that my rates and taxes come to 1s. a qr. on all corn I grow. Wages are higher, men won't do as much, or work as many hours. Skilled labourers are scarce and boys cannot be obtained owing to their being kept too long at school. These changes come to a decided rise in cost per qr. on growing corn, and am of opinion that 2s. is not enough. It ought to be 1s. on all corn, foreign and Colonial, to balance what we pay in rates and taxes. 2s. in addition on foreign corn to help our labour bill and give a preference to the Colonies. I see no reason for the exemption of maize. Far more maize is used by brewers and distillers and by owners of horses in large parts than by farmers. Imported oats are the ones used by owners of horses in the great towns, not by farmers. The great railway companies buy nearly all foreign oats; London uses nearly all foreign oats. Mr. Balfour's statement as to a duty on oats being injurious to farmers was a great error. They have infinitely more to sell than they buy. Wheat should have a decided preference over flour, because the farmer and the poor man alike want the bran, and flour will stand a good difference because it saves $\frac{1}{2}$ of the freight, as 1 ton wheat only makes 15 cwt. of flour.

J. FALCONER, MICHELDEVER, HANTS. ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's proposal would be of no practical benefit to the average British farmer, or to myself as a large arable farmer and feeder of stock. I consider 4s. a qr. would not be too much duty on corn, admitting Colonial free. The duty on flour ought to be at least double to encourage milling in this country and let us have offal for stock at a reasonable price. If a 10 % duty is imposed on feeding stuffs and artificial manures in this great stock-feeding country, now that farmers are realising more and more that the cheapest manure is cake fed to stock, the last state of the British farmer will be worse than the first.

E. STEPHENS, LANGLEY, FIFELE, OXON ; Farmer.

10s. per qr., not to safeguard the interests of my trade, which is very small, but of the country. The agriculturists were the first to smart, I amongst them. At the end of 25 years' struggle my capital is gone. I am now managing 1,000 acres of arable land which pays nothing. I welcome the efforts of the Tariff Commission. The effect of a 10s. duty on foreign countries (or Colonies if they refuse to admit us free) would be the means of bringing other countries to admit us free, of paying some of our ever increasing expenses, raising the demand for labour, and increasing the prices very little, if any, because it would encourage increase of production.

J. HATRICK, CREGGAN, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

I am of opinion it would materially assist, but I would suggest 2s. 6d. at least per qr.

ELI C. HUTCHINGS, HIGHCLIFFE-ON-SEA, NEAR CHRISTCHURCH, HANTS ; Farmer. •

I think the duty suggested would give an impetus to farmers to grow more wheat, which would also increase the reserve of wheat in the country, as we have never more than a six weeks' supply for the population. In the event of a political complication taking place with foreign powers, or the Americans forming a huge combine to corner the same, the situation would become very grave. In addition to this, were the corn all milled in this country we should then have a greater production of offals, which would be very beneficial generally to the stock breeders and farmers as well, and no doubt tend to cheapen the same, and also the means of making more employment. As regards the corresponding duty on flour, I do not consider 2s. sufficient. In my opinion the tax should be 3s. 10d. per sack. As all bakers reckon to make 46 8-lb. loaves from every sack of flour, the baker would naturally raise his bread 1d. per 8-lb. loaf. This would mean that the whole of the tax would go to the Exchequer instead of the baker reaping an extra benefit, which he would do in the case of a 2s. duty as suggested. It would simply work out as Mr. Chamberlain suggested, a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. on a 2-lb. loaf, even at a 2s. duty, as the baker would raise his bread a 1d. on an 8-lb. loaf.

R. B. ONIONS, KYLETELISHA, MARYBOROUGH, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

Too small a duty : could exert very little influence on prices, but it is at least a move in the right direction, and would tend to make livelier markets for home and Colonial produce, giving them the first call on the market. It would be better to put a small duty on maize, say 1s. per qr. from foreign ports, allowing Colonial maize in free.

FORM No. 12,281. Farmer.

Such a duty must be but a small blessing to English farmers, but would be a useful addition to the revenue, and I do not believe that 1 oz. less would be sent to England because of the imposition of a duty as suggested, England being the best market for the world's goods. I favour a 3s. duty on both the corn and flour imported. British mills will not re-open in my opinion at a 2s. duty. British mills re-opening will give the farmer facilities to buy better offals: foreign feeding and fattening cakes should be taxed, to encourage the manufacture of them here on large scale.

FORM No. 12,913. Farmer.

If the present "free and unfair" trade continues, I will be wiped out and every man of my class, and without a change in a few years' time the small tenants over the country will fail in paying their rent annuities, which they are now undertaking, on purchasing their farms. Mr. Chamberlain's proposals are the only hope I can see at present, but they will have to go further than he intends, or else rent-paying in Ireland must come down 5 %. It is impossible to pay present rents, taxes and labour in Ireland, and successfully compete with the "duty free" foreigner, and this difficulty is increasing daily.

1693

J. K. ECCLES, LANDENS, HORLEY, SURREY; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn will help no one, and induce no one to grow more wheat. Whilst it may stimulate the Colonies to grow more, it will not have the effect of curtailing the importation of wheat from the States, Russia and other foreign countries. In the end it will tend to flood this country, more than ever, with wheat, foreign or Colonial. A sufficient rise in the price to help farmers must mean a substantial rise in the price of bread. The interests of the farmer and consumer cannot be reconciled. A duty on imported flour, if it induces the millers to grind more corn, will be an advantage to farmers in so far as it will cheapen the price of feeding stuffs for cattle and pigs. Nothing but a rise of 10s. in the price of wheat would induce many farmers to grow more than they do at present, and if such a rise took place and wheat once more became profitable to grow, the difficulty of labour arises. Increased arable land requires more hands, and the additional profit from higher prices would be more than counterbalanced by the difficulty of obtaining labour except at very much higher wages.

W. C. BROWN, APPLEBY, DONCASTER; Farmer.

2s. per qr. on wheat would not raise its price but would bring in a large sum to the Government. I should then feel the foreign corn would be, as it were, fined like I am when I pay rates and taxes. The preference to our millers would cause more wheat to be ground here, and thus bran would be cheaper.

1694

W. E. BEST, THE CAIRN, AGHALEE, ANTRIM; Farmer.

Of very little assistance. The 2s. duty will probably raise the price for a time and induce the Colonies to extend the area under cereals and develop their export. In consequence, prices will soon come back to their present or possibly a lower level, so that the last state of the home producer will be worse than the first. Probably the stimulus given to the milling industry will give the farmer a larger and cheaper supply of feeding material. It is generally supposed that the 2s. duty is only "the thin end of the wedge." Undoubtedly if the working population would allow a substantial duty to be imposed on foreign corn, the home farmer would at once increase the area under cereals when he could see the opportunity of growing them without loss, as is at present often the case. He would employ more labour (admittedly under more favourable surroundings than is the case in our mills and factories) and induce more people to stay in the rural districts, thereby doing something to improve the physique of future generations.

FORM No. 12,183. Farmer.

Anything tending to raise prices must necessarily be of benefit when the farmers' chief difficulty is that present prices are often much below cost of production. The proposed duty is too low—it might do for a trial on Colonial corn, but I should like it doubled at least on foreign. The Colonies would thus get a very substantial preference, a policy I heartily endorse. Flour, oatmeal and manufactured stuffs should be more than correspondingly taxed. Potatoes, garden stuffs, hay and straw should also be on the list. Indeed, my idea would be to tax all we ourselves could produce with reasonable hope of competing with foreign produce, and let in free that which we either cannot grow at all or could not grow at near the foreign articles' general price. On this ground I should not tax maize for instance, and were it practicable I should let in free tea, coffee, sugar, &c., and raise the necessary revenue on articles of consumption which we could produce in the British Isles.

1695

A. O. T. BENNETT, GATELY HALL, E. DEREHAM, NORFOLK; Farmer.

In my opinion the 2s. duty would harm no one, but it would not help farmers to an appreciable degree. The duty could make no difference in the price of bread, millers and bakers between them realising as they do more for the finished article than the producers get for their corn. The duty on flour ought to be much higher, at least 6s. per cwt. This would compensate millers for the 2s. duty on corn, would enable us to grind most of our flour in this country, would insure our having a certain supply of corn at all the mills, and in a measure help to secure our food supply in time of war; not to mention the benefit it would be to farmers by having a larger and cheaper supply of offals. At present the price of offals, owing to the scarcity of this article, is much too dear: with a larger supply prices would fall in proportion. In Germany, where they have a high duty on corn, both bran and supers can be bought cheaper than in England, this shows that our present policy is wrong somewhere. According to late quotations the price of wheat in London was 29s. and in Berlin 37s. per qr., a difference of 8s. Bread is as cheap in Berlin as in London and offals cheaper. These 8s. do not benefit the consumer, let alone the producer—they remain in the hands of the merchants and manufacturers, a small percentage of course finds its way into the hands of the wage earner, who is better paid and works shorter hours than in Germany; still a 2s. duty on corn ought to make no difference in the price of bread.

1696

JAMES CLARKE, LESDIVIN, STRABANE, CO. TYRONE; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain has not been thinking much about the Irish farmer when he did not propose to put a smart duty on flax, and so prevent the complete disappearance of this crop. Besides, above all other duties, it would not affect the working man, unless by the way of giving more employment. I think a duty of, say, 20 %, would not be too much on flax. The duty on grain alone would be of little benefit to me, but in conjunction with the duty proposed on butter and beef it would be of great service.

R. ANDERSON, ATHY, KILDARE; Farmer.

There should be more than a corresponding duty on flour to give the miller here any preference.

J. SYMONDS, THISTLETON HALL, BURGH, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

I do not think the duty would make much difference, and suggest a double duty on flour.

Duty on Flour

1697 **Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Duty on Flour
— continued —

EDWARD BELL, ROSENALIS, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

Personally a duty would make very little difference to me as I do not grow much corn, but I should like to see the milling industry encouraged so as to give employment in the country. The duty on flour should be higher than on wheat. All manufactured articles should be taxed to give home industry a chance. Free trade coupled with unfair treatment in the past has been the ruin of Ireland.

FORM No. 12,326. Farmer.

Should put a heavier duty on flour, by so doing more flour would be made at home and we should obtain offals cheaper, we having now sometimes to pay £5 10s. and even £6 for bran, when at 50s. it would be one of the safest and best feeds. I have bought middlings years ago under £3 per ton, which, from the same mill, have within the 12 months cost £5 7s. 6d. per ton in 20-ton lots. This would be of immense help to all pig and cattle feeders. A duty on hay, even though small, would be of help to hay farmers.

A. R. FAWCETT, ENFIELD, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

I would let all unmanufactured corn in free and put a tax only on flour and meals, this would give a great fillip to milling in this country which it is badly wanting. If any tax on corn, I quite agree it should not be on Colonial. The raw corn being let in free would give us cattle feeding products which we could buy for value, not as at present.

1698

T. B. NEWITT, CRANFORD, KETTERING, NORTHAMPTON ; Land and Estate Agent and Farmer.

A substantial tax or duty should be put on flour ; I would admit wheat in free as a raw material, but flour, being a manufactured article, should pay a duty equivalent to the amount of tax payable on the British produced article. By admitting wheat free and putting a duty on flour, the offals would come considerably lower than at present, and by that reason would do more to help agriculture on a farm of this description than anything I can at present see. There are many things to consider first, as to whether a duty of 2s. would be any benefit, as there would almost certainly be a rise in wages and perhaps in rent, which would effectually swallow up the extra price which British produce would make.

FORM No. 12,582. Farmer.

Foreign flour should be heavily taxed in order that the offal can be got by farmers for cattle at a reasonable price.

ELIZABETH J. S. RITTER, ROE PARK, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

I fancy a duty on imported flour, so that our millers could get the grinding of the corn and have the waste, bran, &c., to sell for feeding.

1699

M. J. MACKAY, CASTLELYONS, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

It would serve me as far as oats and barley are concerned. Wheat is so little grown in this neighbourhood that I think it would be better to let that commodity come in free, as millers and their employees would gain thereby. I would tax flour heavily, but I would not allow home millers in the event of wheat being let in free to charge as much for their flour as must be paid for the heavily taxed imported article.

J. MUIRHEAD, HEATH, WAKEFIELD, WEST RIDING OF YORKS ; Farmer.

The duty is not large enough to do any good to the farmer. A very heavy duty (prohibitive) should be put on flour so that none should come, and farmers would then benefit by getting bran and offals cheaper for feeding horses, cattle, sheep and pigs.

J. JAMES, WHITCHURCH, NEAR STRATFORD-ON-AVON, WARWICKSHIRE ; Farmer.

The proposal does not go far enough to alter the price of our produce, and the duty on flour ought to be at least 5s. per qr., so that we may obtain offals at our local mills.

H. W. SITWELL, BROADWELL HOUSE, STOCKTON, RUGBY, WARWICKSHIRE ; Farmer.

I think, and the majority of the Warwickshire Farmers' Association are of the same opinion, that there should be a prohibitive duty on foreign flour. Speaking for myself, I think 2s. per qr. on foreign wheat would be an excellent way of increasing the revenue of the country, would be a small benefit to farmers, and perhaps a bigger one, if thereby the income tax was reduced. Whatever the tax on wheat is, I think the tax on flour should be at least double. I do not believe a heavy duty on corn would be possible or good, but 2s. a qr. or even 1s. a qr., which latter never raised the price of wheat 1d., would improve the revenue and not be felt by anybody ; and a heavy tax on flour, whereby the farmer would get his offals cheap and the milling industry would be moved to England, would benefit the whole country. All I have to say to the Committee is, tax the foreigners. Take a leaf out of the German book ; the Germans are not all fools.

FORM No. 12,305. Farmer.

I don't think 2s. per qr. on corn would be any great benefit to the farmer, but a higher duty on flour would benefit home industry.

H. WEST, WISBECH, CAMBS. ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty would be a distinct advantage, but flour I consider should be double, as we have good mills in the district, but the price of all offals is very high considering the price of the raw material. If flour was taxed with a higher duty more corn would be ground, thereby finding employment for our men, and we could obtain the offals at a much cheaper rate.

1700

R. C. WARNER, OAKSEY, MALMESBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

1701

A higher duty should be placed on flour than the corresponding one on wheat. It must benefit the British generally as well as the agriculturists that, if possible, all the wheat flour should be prepared here, thereby giving all pig keepers (a great number being cottagers), farmers, horse keepers, &c., the use of wheat, offals, maize, linseed and cotton seed on the free list, but a duty on linseed cakes and cotton cakes imported. A 2s. duty per qr. on wheat will not be sufficient to make it pay in Great Britain, neither will the country consent to a tax of sufficient amount for this. As compared with our Colonies and foreign countries, Great Britain's climate is not an ideal one for wheat growing; the crop is useful for rotation and the straw is valuable and a necessity on most farms. Malting barley should be taxed, but let feeding barley come in free. Oats may be taxed. First of all try reciprocity or retaliation, and if our Colonies will take our manufactures in free, or with a considerable preference, we, the Old Country, will admit free, or with preference, their corn and produce. A high tariff is not desirable generally.

E. S. L. COLLINS, WELLS, SOMESET ; Farmer.

It would be much better to allow all corn to be imported duty free and a duty of 60 % put on flour, meal, and offals coming from foreign countries (Colonial excepted). This would give more work to our now shut down mills and millers, and we should buy bran and sharps at about half the present price and so produce pork, bacon and milk more cheaply; while the price of flour and meals would not be increased.

1702

J. GIBSON, OMAGH, TYRONE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

I am sure the 2s. per qr. duty on corn would stimulate the farming industry to a great extent, but I think there should be a much heavier duty put on flour as the foreigner keeps all the offal, feeds his pigs and cattle on it, and then sends the bacon and beef into this country to compete against us.

W. SCOTT, ORCHARD, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

2s. a qr. on corn is no use at all and would not help my farm one bit. My opinion is all raw material and corn should come in free, and put a tax on all ground or manufactured stuffs, such as flour, oatmeal, offal, Indian meal—5s. per 20 stone on all these.

FORM No. 12,101. Farmer.

I do not think the 2s. on corn will help much, though of course it will always be some assistance. But there should, in my opinion, be a heavy tax on flour which could all be made in this country.

J. COULTHARD, FAUGH BEECHES, HEADS NOOK, CARLISLE, CUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

I would not allow flour or meal to come into this country from abroad at all. Wheat can be carried cheaper in bulk than it can be carried as flour. Surely we could grind it ourselves and pay the wages to our own workmen in place of paying the wages of the foreigner. We would also have all the offal for feeding purposes, and could also adulterate it ourselves if we thought proper. When we had our flour ground at our own mills, now all shut up, bread was good a week after it was baked; now in 3 days it goes hard and dry and is uneatable. It is all foreign made flour and mixed with alum or anything white which is cheaper than flour. It is no good having a cheap loaf for our working men if they have no work. They can only see it through the shop window; they have nothing in their pocket to buy it with. Give them employment and they would do better if the loaf was twice the price.

1703

J. BOYD, TUBBER, CHURCHTOWN, DERRY, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

This duty which Mr. Chamberlain proposes will be for the benefit of all connected with agriculture, as grain growing in the past has ceased to be profitable, in fact, it was a dead loss. But a greater duty should be put on the manufactured article, such as flour, and less on the raw material. If this were done it would benefit the miller, would provide more employment for the working class, and give the farmer cheaper feeding for his cattle.

G. STREET, MAULDEN, AMPHILL, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

1704

A 2s. duty on wheat will make but little difference in the price of wheat or bread, as the surplus production is generally sent to England. A duty (and the more the better) on flour will be to the advantage of millers, farmers, and all who keep horses, cattle, sheep or pigs, from the shire horse to the cottager's pig. In 1901 when our crops were burnt up on light lands, with the exception of wheat, which was the only crop which stood the scorching weather, I gave a neighbouring miller £6 per ton for "dass" or "fine middlings," the offal of wheat. The miller at the same time offered me 27s. 6d. per qr., 63 loads per bushel, for fine wheat, which came to the same price per ton as I was paying on an average for "dass" and foreign cakes and other feeding stuffs. Yet there was a great fuss made about the 1s. duty and the "poorest of the poor," when fine wheat in good condition only cost the same per ton as the food with which we fed pigs. I would suggest that a small duty of at least 6d. per bushel should be put on potatoes, the growth of which could be considerably increased in this country. It should be borne in mind that every cottager in the country is a producer and has potatoes to sell, except in the last exceptional year, which was a failure.

J. GLYNN, DUNMORE, GALWAY ; Farmer.

There should be a higher duty on flour than on corn, as corn will give more labour to our home millers. Colonial corn should not be admitted free, or if it is we shall be just as bad as ever. A wonderful assistance to all the farming class.

**1705 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Duty on Flour
—continued.

E. FOREMAN, SQUERRYES COURT, WESTERHAM, KENT; Bailiff to LIEUT.-COL. WARDE.

A duty of 4s. on flour per qr. would be preferable to a 2s. on corn, because we should get more corn and less flour, consequently more offals from the British millers which all breeders of stock require, both working men and farmers. I consider an import duty should be imposed on hops to the benefit of the British growers. Each foreign country pay the same as charged by them for the British hop.

W. A. COOPER, COOPER'S HILL, CARLOW; Farmer.

A duty on flour is wanted very badly to keep our mills going. We farmers would get bran, pollard, &c., for feeding cattle much cheaper. It would not be safe should there be a possibility of war to depend altogether on foreign flour. I believe the best millers are not able to make a profit.

ROBERT LONG, UPPER STONDON, SHEFFORD S.O., BEDS.; Farmer.

2s. per qr. on corn would certainly help arable farming, but would not make wheat growing profitable. A heavier duty than an equivalent of 2s. per qr. should be put on foreign flour to encourage British milling, and to lower the price of offals, which are now too dear to use profitably, in comparison with the price of meat.

FORM No. 12,127. Farmer.

A 2s. tax will be very trifling benefit to the farmer. A tax of not less than 10s. per sack on foreign flour would mean more wheat ground in this country, and so offals more plentiful and cheaper to buy.

G. RABY, FYFIELD HALL, ONGAR, ESSEX; Farmer.

A 2s. corn duty will not help much and would not induce the growth of a much larger acreage. A substantial duty on flour would help farmers more than anything else and lead to increased trade in country districts.

E. BROUGHALL, WYKEY HOUSE, RUYTON ELEVEN TOWNS, SALOP; Farmer.

I don't anticipate much benefit from the duty on wheat, and I also think the duty on flour should be higher, say, twice as much, so as to give the British farmer cheaper wheat offals by encouraging the milling industry.

CAPT. E. G. PRETTYMAN, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

The greatest advantage would accrue from a heavy differential duty against flour. This would increase the supplies of offal available for stock feeding. Stock is now the mainstay of farming and the cost of feeding stuffs is a severe handicap. I believe a ton of bran is often worth more than a ton of wheat. The duty on cereals would be a small help and might just counterbalance any increased cost of manufactured articles which the farmer has to buy. If Colonial corn is admitted free this advantage would disappear. Colonial flour should not be free.

F. H. TAYLOR, SOMERFORD, BREWOOD, STAFFORD, STAFFS.; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's tariff will affect us very little. I am in favour of all raw material being admitted free and tax flour heavily; by this we shall get the offals which we sadly want, at present they remain abroad. The proposed tariff is a step in the right direction, but to benefit the British farmer is of very little use.

C. B. STIBY, BRADFORD-PEVERELL, DORCHESTER; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on wheat would not be any advantage to the English grower. It would add to the revenue, but would not increase the price, and would cause a great deal of discontent. Flour I would tax high enough to be almost prohibitive, it would greatly help the farmer and not injure the consumer. It would greatly benefit the farm if a tax was put on all grain used for distilling and brewing purposes, the feeding grain free, that is, all grain not used for the before-mentioned purposes. I am sure it would be a great advantage to the farmer if the roads, police and education were paid out of the Exchequer account. These are national advantages enjoyed by all, and therefore would not be class legislation.

A. C. HALL, GREAT ROLLRIGHT, CHIPPING NORTON, OXON.; Farmer.

With a 2s. duty on corn I should continue to grow as much as I now do instead of reducing it as I intend doing, if no duty is put on. A duty on flour would be of far greater benefit to me as a large stock owner, as it would give a larger supply of wheat "offals." In other ways—employment in mills, supply of fresh instead of stale flour—a duty heavy enough to keep out a great deal of foreign flour would be of the greatest benefit to the whole country.

A. PARKHILL, CULLION, CO. LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

The quantity of wheat grown is so small that a tax would directly do no good. A very heavy tax on flour and a very light, if any, tax on wheat would benefit me more. The wheat would then all be milled at home, flour would be little dearer than at present, and the by-products, bran, &c., so useful for feeding purposes, would be very much cheaper. Oats are the principal grain crop here, very little land is capable of carrying wheat. A 2s. duty on oats would benefit me. It would perhaps only raise the price a little at first, but after a time the competing nations would send in more duty free corn and maize and less oats, so the price would be correspondingly higher.

H. FRY, BARNSTON LODGE, DUNMOW, ESSEX; Farmer.

The duty on flour should be quite double that on wheat. The advantage to the farmer would be considerable in buying offal. This was experienced when the last duty was put on by Mr. Ritchie.

1706

1707

1708

T. FLOOD, NEWHALL, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

We would prefer the duty to be imposed on flour, so that there would be more employment in this country, and more feeding for our cattle in the offal. At present, more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the flour mills formerly working, are in ruins, and bran and pollard are almost as dear per stone as wheat.

THOMAS CHARTRES, WOOLER, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

Whatever duty may be put on corn, a much higher duty should be put on flour, so that the mills which have been closed in this country would be opened again. They would require new machinery, which would be made in England, thereby employing many more men than at present, both in the manufactories and the mills. Also farmers, horse keepers and pig feeders would benefit by the offals of the wheat being cheaper. I also think all maize used by brewers and distillers should be taxed.

J. A. PELL, WATER HALL, WIXOE, HALSTEAD, ESSEX ; Farmer.

It ought to reduce the taxes and rates on land somewhat, but it is perfectly ridiculous to put the same duty on flour as on wheat or corn. It certainly ought at least to be double, say, 4s. per qr., by which means we might possibly find employment for more men to work in our mills and reduce the prices of the various offals, bran, middlings, and which are now out of all proportion to the price we make of our wheat. No doubt if the duty was higher on flour, wheat would come over for us to manufacture, and by that means our millers would have a larger supply of offals to dispose of to farmers for cow keeping, pig feeding, &c. In fact I would go even higher than a 4s. duty per qr. on flour, say, at least 10s. per qr., as I do not see how it could hurt our labouring population in any way ; in fact, benefit them by finding full employment in our milling industry which, especially in the country, is very slack, and also as I have before said, increasing the supply of offals, which must benefit all stockmen, cow keepers, pig feeders, &c., and indirectly his chief customer, the working man.

A. O'CONNOR, CELBRIDGE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The tariff on corn does not affect me very much, as I use all the corn I grow. But I consider there should be a tariff put on corn manufactured.

W. R. CLUTTERBUCK, LONG WITTENHAM, ABINGDON, BERKS. ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn would not benefit farmers or alter price of corn. A duty on flour would benefit millers and make offal cheaper for feeding purposes for farmers.

FORM NO. 12,649. Farmer.

This duty would not be any benefit to me as a farmer, but the duty on flour might benefit us all, as the corn would be ground in this country and offals would be much cheaper.

W. H. MOSSE, BINNETT'S BRIDGE MILLS, KILKENNY ; Farmer and Miller.

I would let in all corn, wheat and oats free, and put 3s. per sack duty on foreign flour and oatmeal. Would have compensating advantages from extra labour, more mill offals, which would become much cheaper from extra production, and farmers could then feed cattle far cheaper and be in a better position to compete with foreigners' cattle. I may mention present price of good bran is £6 5s. per ton and 50 years ago when all flour consumed in Ireland was manufactured there, price was £2 per ton.

P. M. O'MALLEY, MAAM, GALWAY ; Farmer.

I would not object to put a 2s. duty on flour, as bran and pollard would be cheaper if the wheat was ground in the mills at home. I would approve of a small tax on flour imported no matter from where, but let any corn—such as wheat, oats, barley—in, except a slight duty. Maize does not grow in our country and should be free, in fact, any produce consumed in this country that does not grow in it should be free, but everything that grows at home should pay duty, then the people at home will grow more. This will make them self-supporting and not dependent on foreigners for their food, and have more work at home and better pay. More should pay duty, such as wool, &c., and all manufactured goods, as those would give a lot of employment. Tea and sugar duty should be reduced or remitted altogether, it would more than balance the duty on flour.

J. COATES, RATHDRUM, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

My idea of Mr. Chamberlain's proposed duty is, that all unmanufactured grain ought to be admitted free, thus giving our mills the chance of more employment and indirectly helping the working classes. Manufactured corn can well stand a substantial tax because our present condition as regards the growing of corn is most unsatisfactory. We are not able to grow it with any hope of profit as long as the manufactured stuff is permitted access to the country. My fear with regard to the imposition of a tax on unmanufactured corn is that by passing beyond a certain limit in our taxation of these things we may be helping to raise the prices of food to the working classes.

P. & C. SEWARD, BOROUGH HOUSE, PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE ; Farmers.

The corn duty will make no difference to us, although we are large buyers of oats and feeding stuffs. During our last financial year we were buyers of 750 qrs. of oats for feeding purposes. Maize should not be free from duty, for it is used very little by farmers, but very largely by brewers. 2s. per qr. duty will make no difference to the price of oats, and therefore we shall not be losers by it. A large tax on flour is essential, so that imports of wheat should increase and flour decrease, and in that case the offals would greatly benefit English farmers. A tax of 10s. per cwt. should be imposed upon foreign hops at least. This country is the dumping ground for the surplus of the whole world, which acts against the English hop industry. This is proved by the great reduction in the acreage during the last 20 years, while the acreage of foreign countries has increased, and yet this country can grow the best hops in the world.

1713 **Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Duty on Flour
—continued.

E. W. HONARD, COLEBY LODGE, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's 2s. duty would perhaps make my balance £40 better on the year, but as an arable land farmer I would rather put the duty on flour, for we much require the offals, bran, &c., and this would help much in feeding our horses, sheep, pigs, &c. I would suggest the mild 2s. on corn and double on flour. But barley, not being the food of the people, has much room for duty and would help arable farmers very much.

SIR R. NIGEL F. KINGSCOTE, G.C.V.O., &c., KINGSCOTE, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE, GLOS. ; Farmer.

The duty on corn of 2s. per qr. would hardly raise the price of our produce, but would help to steady it. But a sufficiently high duty on imported flour is much needed, as not only bran and other millers' offals would be available at more reasonable rates consequent on a larger supply, but mills would be started again, which would undoubtedly benefit all agricultural industry.

J. B. A. BOSANQUET, LAHARDAN HOUSE, PORTLAW, CO. WATERFORD ; Farmer.

I think there should be a greater duty on flour than on corn. Our mills would run ; the refuse would feed our pigs and stock ; and more employment would be given, which would circulate money and create industry in country districts. I calculate that if all milling was done at home, the industry would support 1 million people. The duty would steady the price of home-grown corn, but would not materially raise it. Still it ought to ensure a working profit, more would be produced at home, and a home food supply would relieve our fleet of a great responsibility if war was to come.

FORM No. 3,475. Corn Millers.

We consider free trade the most remunerative policy in the long run, but think imported flour should bear a proportion of the taxes that the wheat has to pay which is imported into this country, so that the home manufacturer should not be put at a disadvantage.

J. PARKER TOONE, HIGH CROSS, RUGBY ; Farmer.

2s. per qr. will not be of any benefit either to me or to the average farmer. Corn is only grown to assist in keeping more live stock. Then again we purchase so much more imported meal, cakes, &c., that the balance will be very seriously against the stock keeper when all is considered. If the duty on flour were put up to say 10s. per qr. and the raw material (wheat) admitted free, it would encourage the milling industry and we should obtain more and cheaper offal (bran, &c.).

JAMES COLLINS & SONS, CAMDEN MILLS, BATH ; Flour Millers.

It appears to us that an import duty of a moderate amount on foreign wheat and flour would probably produce no increase of individual millers' profits as home competition would be too keen to permit of this, but we think there would be a considerable increase in the number and capacity of mills operated, with a corresponding increase of employment for labour.

A small duty on wheat, flour, &c., would not affect price to the consumer beyond the extent of the increase in wages of employees, or practically not at all ; employment would be increased, and wages would no doubt be improved. It sometimes happens that foreign flour is dumped in this country at prices which are apparently less than cost, and we suffer accordingly ; a small duty should obviate this.

R. M. DOWSE, CARNEW, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

This duty on corn would not be of any assistance to me, but I would be glad to see a bigger duty than the above put on flour, so as to enable our flour mills to start again, thus giving a large number of our people employment, now so badly wanted, besides making a large quantity of feeding stuffs from the offal of the wheat, which is now kept in the countries where the flour is made, thus making those feeding stuffs scarce and dear, bran for instance being almost as dear as flour.

COL. G. W. RAIKES, F.S.I., DUNNINGTON HEATH, ALCESTER, WARWICKSHIRE ; Farmer.

I do not anticipate any benefit to the British farmer by the imposition of a 2s. per qr. duty on foreign corn. I believe that the duty will be mostly if not entirely paid by the sender abroad. If this should not prove correct the duty would be a disadvantage to British farmers who buy considerable quantities of cheap foreign corn for cattle feeding, to say nothing of the large quantities used in the manufacture of feeding cakes and meals of all kinds. The corn duty should be considered as simply a preferential tariff in favour of the Colonies. The flour duty is different. It should be higher in proportion than the duty on wheat, and levied, not with the view of altering the price of bread, but of restricting the importation of flour, to the encouragement of British milling and to the cheapening of all milling offals, which are most important to farmers, dairymen, horse keepers, and everybody who owns or feeds a pig. An abundance of fresh sweet bran and sharps at lower prices would reduce my pig feeding bill and that of every labourer in my employ. I should like 1s. per cwt. put on flour and malting barley from foreign countries and half this duty on the same things from our Colonies, allowing all other corn, including wheat, to come free from such parts of the world as would grant us concessions in return.

FORM No. 12,714. Farmer.

The proposed duty of 2s. per qr. would have a very small effect on the price of home products, but should, to a certain extent, be an advantage to the British farmer. The duty on flour ought to be considerably higher than on corn. This should have the effect of reviving milling and thus increasing the quantity of by-products produced, so valuable to the farmer, for feeding purposes.

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J. T. BUTLER, PRIESTOWN, CO. MEATH; Farmer.

Why give the opponents of the proposal such a handle as a duty on corn? A much lighter tax on flour would be of very great benefit to all cattle feeders, not mentioning the extra employment to mill hands, &c. The foreigners would have to send corn instead of flour. This would give the farmer a very large quantity of cattle food that is now used by his competitors. If you glance at a market report, you will see bran quoted as high, sometimes higher, than wheat. Of course, bran is by no means the most useful by-product of milling; pollard, toppings, &c., are all as useful to the poor man as maize, and if we had our milling industry again these by-products would be greatly reduced in price.

FORM No. 12,606. Farmer.

The duty on oats would benefit me very little, but on flour would benefit the country greatly, as it would restart mills now closed all over the country and give a lot of employment. We would also have cheaper bran, sharps, &c., very useful in a country where there is so much dairying.

FORM No. 12,494. Bacon, Butter Merchant, &c.

The duty on flour should be considerably higher than on corn, so as to encourage the milling of foreign corn in this country. By this, the offals, which are now used in foreign countries to feed cattle and pigs, in competition with our farmers, would to a considerable extent be available at reasonable rates for the home producer. This is a most important point.

1718

E. J. STORY, D.L., KILSKEERY, TYRONE; Farmer.

If mills were started again I could buy the offals of wheat which now are retained in America. I was 10 years an American ranchman, owning property in Oregon, and know the average American regards British trade methods as absurd. American flour ought to be boycotted by a heavy duty and wheat charged 2s. Maize should be let in free, as the food of the very poor.

J. H. URIDGE, SUMMERFORD, WITHTHAM, SUSSEX; Farmer.

We want no tax at all on wheat but a very heavy tax on flour. Let wheat come in free. We want the offals cheaper, which would then be sure to follow.

C. BARWELL FIELD, BOWMANS, COLNEY, ST. ALBANS, HERTS.; Farmer.

As the 1s. duty on wheat never benefited the English farmer, it is not likely 2s. would. 2s. per qr. on oats would benefit the English farmer a little, because it is a much lighter duty compared with 2s. on wheat. But no duty whatever should be put on wheat. Put a heavy duty on flour and all manufactured goods, this would foster a great milling industry and give the English farmer the milling offals to produce meat, a benefit the foreigner now enjoys. From 250 to 300 bullocks per annum were sent off this farm fatted. I have now abandoned this business, and the foreigner has captured the market.

1719

J. C. HATHERALL, OLDBURY-ON-THE-HILL, DIDMARTON, GLOS.; Farmer.

All corn ought to come in free, and all manufactured goods to be taxed at more than 2s. per qr.

J. FLOWER, CHILMARK, SALISBURY, WILTS.; Farmer.

The 2s. duty would certainly be a help. I would give a strong and substantial preference to the English miller. I should at any rate double the duty on foreign flour. The question of Colonial corn being free is a difficult one. If England gives them a bonus as it were, they should contribute something in return. English farming never will be better till the prices of corn improve, foreign competition and flooded markets here have practically made a bankrupt of the English farmer.

FORM No. 12,220. Farmer.

Let wheat and all other feeding stuffs come in free, but put a substantial duty on flour imported. By doing this, on farms that use a great deal of cake, &c., they will still remain at reasonable prices, and as regards flour, we shall help the milling trade in this country, and also be able to buy offals at a fair price, instead of the exorbitant prices of the last 10 years.

1720

J. M. HARRIS, CHILVESTER LODGE, CALNE, WILTS.; Bacon Curer.

If a duty is put on corn it should include maize, principal reasons for which are that it is a bad food for cattle and pigs, as it produces soft and bad quantity meat. There is now very little maize used for human food, it is used for distilling a cheap spirit. If maize is admitted free, barley certainly should be also. It is the principal food used by farmers for pigs, and largely for cattle, making prime quality meat, and our great competitors the Danes admit it (barley) free, to encourage the feeding of hogs. A heavy duty should be put on flour which would open the smaller country mills, many of which are now closed.

FORM No. 12,354. Farmer.

The duty on corn would not help us much, a heavier duty on flour and all manufactured goods I think would.

FORM No. 12,328. Farmer.

As I consume more corn than I grow, it will not be of much advantage to me. If the duty were only on flour it might be, for if the wheat came free, we should get our bran and offals cheaper, and be able to keep more stock on our farm, which means more manure going back on the land.

**1721 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

**Duty on Flour
—continued.**

WALTER GRAHAM & CO., HEADLEY OIL MILLS, GREENWICH, LONDON, S.E.; Oilcake Manufacturers.

If a duty be put on flour in this country and not on oilcake then the trade will be killed, as it will not be able to survive the competition of cheap offals which would be produced here in largely increased quantities.

C 582. Farmer.

In my opinion there is nothing to put agriculture in a flourishing position except a tax on wheat with a greater one on flour, and the part removal of the present excessive tax on beer placed instead upon imported foreign malting barley.

FORM No. 12,404. Farmer.

I do not think the proposed duty will raise the price of grain, but I think it just and fair that the foreign produce should share the taxation we bear. It is not fair that the foreigner should be allowed to make his living in our markets, without his paying an equal share of the taxation. If the duty were taken off, or largely reduced on our wool and potatoes going into America, we should be much better off. Letting in the wheat cheaper than the flour would be a great advantage in giving us cheaper offal, &c.

G. HUMPHREYS, BROGBORO' PARK, APSLEY GUISE, BEDS.; Farmer.

Mine being a wheat-growing farm the 2s. per qr. on wheat would be a considerable advantage to me. The duty on flour should be considerably higher, as the offals from the wheat would be a great advantage in keeping our stock cheaper.

C. P. ALLIX, SWAFFHAM PRIOR, CAMBRIDGE; Farmer.

This would benefit me for a short term of years (4 or 5 perhaps) until the increased quantities of corn coming from the Colonies by this stimulus lowered prices beyond present level, when it would be more impossible than ever to farm at a profit in this country. The duty on flour is most important, and will always be a benefit to the English farmer by cheapening offals. It will also benefit by making the miller more prosperous and enabling him to give better prices to the farmer for provender, &c.

FORM No. 6,667. Millers.

We should tax foreign flour only—5s. per 20 stones. Nothing on wheat or offals or maize. This would benefit millers and also farmers, two very important representatives of the country. You have not said how you are going to convince the working people of this country that a duty on their food is going to be to their advantage. The working class of this country mean to have cheap bread, &c., and they are the majority.

R. STAPLEY, HOREHAM ROAD, SUSSEX; Farmer.

This duty on corn would be of no advantage whatever. A duty on flour would be of advantage in stimulating local milling, and reducing the price of offal for home feeding purposes, but if Colonial flour be admitted free this advantage would be lost.

HASLER & CLAPHAM, DUNMOW, ESSEX; Farmer.

A duty on flour would probably be beneficial, as it would tend to increase the output of milling offals and cheapen them for stock feeding. A duty on corn would, so far as we can see, be of no benefit to us farmers, as we annually buy more foreign oats, barley, &c., for stock feeding, than we sell of English growth. Considering the tendency of recent years, which has shown that the world's consumption of wheat is very close to the production annually, it is a question to us whether a 2s. preferential duty would not stimulate production in Canada to such an extent as to eventually lower prices instead of raise them.

W. DOWNES WEBBER, MITCHELSTOWN CASTLE, CO. CORK; Farmer.

The proposed duties would not make it advisable for me to undertake the growth of cereals for market. The duty on corn might add to its price either the exact amount of the duty, or a less amount than the duty, or a greater amount. Most frequently I believe it would be the third alternative—which would be a loss to me in the purchase of feeding stuffs, oats or barley. I cannot judge if the free admission of maize would tend to maintain its existing price. It might rise in sympathy with other markets. The effect of admitting cereals from the Colonies, especially India, free, should be to prevent such fluctuation of prices as would probably occur if all countries were liable to duties. As a consumer of cereals and feeding stuffs, I prefer that they should be duty free. In regard to the duty on wheat and flour, it would tend to raise the price of bread and so labourers' wages. The duty on flour would have the compensating public advantages of encouraging the milling industry and yielding an increased supply of bran and other wheat offals for the use of feeders of live stock.

F. NEAME, MACKNADE, FAVERSHAM, KENT; Hop Grower and Farmer.

On this description of farm 2s. a qr. duty put on foreign wheat would make but a very small difference to the returns, assuming that the price of wheat was thereby raised to that extent, which is impossible. I think there might well be a duty on foreign flour to encourage the home industry, and perhaps to augment the home supply of offal from grinding; and I am quite in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposal with regard to a 2s. duty on foreign wheat. And though I purchase a considerable quantity of foreign barley for feeding purposes, and sometimes oats and peas, it is probable the benefit might balance the injury. On lands that are all grass and used for dairying, the cost of purchased food being raised would need compensation through the proposed tax on foreign dairy produce.

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S. J. LEESON, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

Under methods of agriculture practised in this district I would not anticipate much benefit from a duty on wheat ; a duty on flour might possibly lead to the opening of some of the mills now closed and a probable cheapening of pollard and bran, both largely used for cattle and pig feeding. A duty on oats would help us.

J. M. PARRY & Co., WESTBURY, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Cider and Perry Makers.

The proposed duty is not sufficient to raise the price so as to encourage corn growing, but the corresponding duty on flour will tend to reduce the price of wheat offals, which will be of assistance in stock rearing. The duty on flour should be much higher, flour can be made by our men and mills equally well as abroad, and stock rearers would have a great advantage in the large supply of bran, &c., whereas at present the foreigner gets the advantage of cheap offals with which he feeds beef and pork to compete with us. Give us the cheap food and we can produce cheap meat. Imported hay and straw could be taxed without injury to any that can afford it, and if these products were slightly raised in price it would be of great benefit. I am surprised they do not seem to be included in the list under consideration.

J. E. SCOTSON, GATEACRE, NEAR LIVERPOOL ; Farmer.

I favour a preference being given to the miller in this country, so that we shall be able to have the offals at something like their proper value. I am paying to-day almost as much for bran per score of pounds as I can get for my best wheat. I think more milling of foreign corn in this country would alter this state of things. The cheaper the offals are, the more cattle, sheep and pigs could be kept in this country. This would give more employment to the labourer.

1726

WALTER BROWN & Co., HANOVER STREET FLOUR MILLS, DUBLIN ; Flour Millers.

American imports of flour into Ireland cause loss of wages, profit, and local taxation to the country and also loss of revenue to the Exchequer. These imports occasion loss to farmers in Ireland through scarcity of offals from wheat and consequent high price, while the offal from the American flour imported is sold there at very low prices and fed to American stock, which therefore is more easily able to compete in price with Irish-fed stock.

ALFRED BRADBRIDGE, CHELMSFORD Manufacturer of Flour, Feeding Stuffs and Manures.

The importation of flour causes ruin of country and other small flour mills. Stebbing, in Essex, used to possess 7 flour mills ; owing to the importation of foreign flour 5 of these have completely disappeared.

H. V. SHERINGHAM, SOUTH CREAKE, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

1727

A 2s. per qr. duty on wheat would probably not affect the value of this cereal at all, as its market value at the present time is governed almost entirely by the surplus available for export from other countries. A duty on foreign barley would be a substantial advantage, and would assist farmers in the Eastern Counties more than a duty on wheat, especially if the 2s. per qr. suggested could be exceeded. A duty on flour would tend to cheapen milling offal, and would be an advantage for this reason.

A. J. F. GIBBONS, COBO, GUERNSEY ; Farmer.

What Mr. Chamberlain should do is to put a duty on flour only, and so restore English milling and give farmers cheaper food stuffs in the way of offal. I need manure to the value of £400 a year, find home-made the best, and need to make this as cheaply as possible.

R. C. GOODEN-CHISHOLM, WHIN CROFT, WIMBORNE, DORSET.

The general opinion of farmers, mill owners, &c., about here, in which I share, is that the 2s. qr. duty on corn will not assist and 2s. on flour very little. We all think all flour should be taxed if any duty is to be put on to help agriculture—rendering offals cheap—a great matter in a country like this, of small holdings, relying in a great measure on pigs and poultry. A 2s. duty would probably not affect the price any more than the 1s. registration duty on corn—it would be paid by producer.

1728

S. M. MACROBY, LTD., LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Corn Millers and Merchants.

It would be most useful, the small tax on wheat and barley would encourage farmers to grow these as formerly, but I would strongly advocate a duty on flour and oatmeal, whether from the Colonies or foreign countries, with a view to encourage milling at home, which besides giving employment, would ensure a plentiful supply of mill offals for cattle food, which is all important for the United Kingdom and especially so for Ireland.

CHARLES HOBBS, STREATLEY MILLS, READING ; Flour Miller.

In my humble opinion foreign flour should be taxed and the raw material (wheat) should be admitted free. This I believe would benefit myself and enable my neighbours—the farmers—to obtain their offals for feeding purposes at a lower price.

FORM No. 12,411. Farmer.

I am not sure that there will be a benefit, as everyone that the tenant farmer has to deal with will want most of the 2s. a qr. If the foreign flour was taxed heavier—that is the article. Also, the foreign feeding cake, &c., and hay, want as much taxing as corn.

1729 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour

Duty on Flour
—continued.

A. P. TURNER, THE LEEN, PEMBRIDGE, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

The benefit would be very slight if any. A larger duty on imported flour giving a substantial preference to the miller would do something to revive the industry of country milling, which has been ruined by the competition with millers living in the neighbourhood of seaports, who use no English wheat. It would also increase the supply of milling offals for stock feeding, which would benefit both farmer and cottager in the country.

E. WILLIAMS, LANUSE, USK, MONMOUTH ; Farmer.

Much benefit will not be derived by a 2s. per qr. duty on wheat. A much heavier duty should be placed upon flour ; it would be an advantage to have mill offals more plentiful.

R. CHILDEEN, HAWDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT ; Farmer.

Do not think 2s. per qr. on corn would help much, would probably mean about £8 or £10 a year personally, but if flour could be ground at local mills it would help the feeder of cattle largely, i.e., flour should be taxed heavier than grain.

H. WILLIAMS, RED HOUSE, LLANSAINTFRAED, ABERGAVENNY ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn might benefit the grower of corn to the extent of say 5 %, and might slightly lessen the tendency to lay more land down to grass. But I do not think such a duty would have any effect in causing land now laid down to be broken up again. A high duty on imported flour would much benefit the English farmer by resuscitating the English country mills, thereby giving him a choice of customers at his own door for his wheat, instead of, as now, being obliged to sell it to the large seaboard mills, incurring carriage both ways to his detriment. But much more than this would it benefit him by giving him the offals, which are to him a necessity, and for which now he pays very dearly.

W. MCGHIE, STRANORLAR, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I would double the duty on flour, I believe it would be a great benefit to farmers in this country as growing cereals in this country does not pay. We should protect our industries all over by taxing all manufactured stuff coming in, and as far as possible letting the raw material in free.

J. MARK, MYROE, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

It will help the Treasury, but will not lessen the cost of home production nor add to the price obtainable for the article produced. My judgment is the duty suggested will not be felt one way or another by the home farmer. I don't see that it can benefit us. We will receive just what we have been receiving, the surplus production of the foreigner, with an increase from the Colonies. If so, the farmer's prospects at home are no brighter. You propose a 2s. per qr. duty on corn with a corresponding duty on flour. Now, I would increase the duty on the manufactured article as compared with the whole corn. Tax the flour, should you ease the corn.

G. A. HARRISON, TWEED HOUSE, BERWICK-ON-TWEED ; Farmer.

All grain should be admitted into this country duty free, but a heavy duty should be put on all manufactured goods, such as flour, &c., so as to encourage home labour—cartwrights, millwrights, millers, saddlers—and to enable small mills to compete against American-manufactured flour, and so retain bran, pollard, &c., and use as feeding stuffs.

B. COLE, THE HYDE MILLS, LUTON, BEDFORD ; Farmer.

I would suggest all wheat free, a larger duty on flour and all foreign manufactured goods. If flour is taxed, it would be better for all cattle feeders, as the offals, such as middlings and bran, would be much more plentiful for feeding cattle and pigs.

R. H. MARFELL, UPPER LLANCARGO, USK, NEAR NEWPORT, MON. ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a tax on all manufactured grain, but would admit all raw grain free of duty, as I consider farmers in this country will be large purchasers of feeding materials, such as linseed cake, cotton seed cake, maize and barley. Bran is an article much sought after by farmers and horse-keepers, and I venture to think if all the flour consumed in Great Britain was manufactured at home the English farmer would greatly benefit, being able to purchase his bran, &c., at a much cheaper rate.

J. MIDDLETON, FEARN, N.B. ; Farmer.

The 2s. on wheat cannot benefit the home farmer very much. More encouragement should be given to manufacture wheat and flour at home, thereby giving farmers the benefit of the by-products. Bran is often dearer in my quarter than wheat ground into meal. Anything done to benefit the Colonies has my hearty approval.

R. BURRA, GATE, SEDBERGH, YORKSHIRE ; Farmer.

I do not think that this would in the long run benefit my tenants under the conditions of their farming, except that they would derive considerable advantage from the cheapening of offal from British millers in respect of the increased grinding of corn.

THE MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S FARMERS' CLUB, MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S, BLANDFORD ; Farmers.

The duty of 2s. on wheat will not increase production. A duty of 2s. on feeding barley will be detrimental. A duty of 2s. per cwt. on flour would tend to restart a number of country mills to local advantage, especially in providing offals at a cheap rate. A duty on malting barley would help the farmer, and not hurt the brewer if a reduction was made on the excise duty of beer.

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T. F. LEVINGE, KILLUCAN, WESTMEATH; Farmer.

A protective duty on corn could be of no benefit to me, and being in a great measure ignorant of the capabilities of our Colonies, unless they could keep up the supply at no increase of price the result would be injurious (very much so, I should say) to Irish interests where the question is stock-raising, and feeding an otherwise unprovided population. The offal of the corn being generally required for feeding and fattening of stock (while of course the manufactured article feeds the population, who grow next to nothing for themselves) I have always favoured a scheme which would keep back the manufactured article and admit the raw material free. This I claim would have the effect of giving more employment at home and cheaper and better feeding for our population and live stock. At present the manufactured article is sent here to injure our artisan population, while the offal is kept abroad to assist in handicapping our meat market. This is our real grievance in Ireland.

J. HUTCHEON, LOWER COLLEWISS, TURRIFF, ABERDEENSHIRE; Farmer.

I fully approve of the duty on wheat, but would make the duty on flour at least equal to 5s. on wheat as against 2s. I would anticipate such an arrangement as greatly to the benefit of the home manufacturers' industry, and also to the benefit of the farmer in cheapening and increasing the supply of bran, so useful and necessary to horses, cows, pigs, &c. I heartily approve of giving Colonial corn a preference, securing to us immense material advantages, which ought to be fostered and cultivated on all hands by the mother-country. I am, however, by no means in harmony with the general admission of maize free of duty. The article competes with the main crop oats, the only kind of corn the greater part of the north of Scotland can produce. It is also reducing the value of our barley, and is taking its place largely in the manufacture of whisky. It is more a foreign than a Colonial product, and I see no reason for its favourable treatment from an agricultural point of view. I am fully of opinion that the moderate tax proposed would be met mainly by the importer, while the revenue derived could be utilised as the wisdom of Parliament devised. Had the late Chancellor not remitted the Corn Tax the country would never have felt it. We want more decent sort of security for money invested on our occupation, and I view the Tariff investigation with exceedingly friendly eyes, having long advocated, on platform and press, something on similar lines.

T. CROCKETT, MONESS, BIUL, LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

Being a feeder of dairy cattle, I consider that it would be a great benefit to have the flour manufactured in this country, so that we would have the benefit of the bran and pollard for consumption here instead of, as at present, in the States.

J. JEFFERSON, PEEL HALL, CHESTER; Farmer.

Such a slight duty as 2s. per qr. would not raise the price of corn to a paying point. I should not grow an acre more corn. To benefit the British farmer the duty should be heavy on imported wheat-flour, and then the corn would be ground in Great Britain and the British farmer would be able to obtain his offals much cheaper than at present.

S. J. KNIGHT, EAST DUNDREY, BRISTOL; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on corn will not make much difference to agriculturists or the country at large. We have wheat at present at 13s. 6d. per sack, the additional 1s. making it 14s. 6d. I have always thought it wrong to allow so much flour to be brought in free. For some years it has not been an unusual event to send our teams to the millers for offals and come away empty. If more wheat were ground at home this would not happen, and if the duty on flour caused more to be manufactured at home I feel sure good will be done. I buy 10 tons of grain to 1 sold.

LT.-COL. W. D. LEWES, J.P., D.L., LLYSNEWYDD, HENLLAN, LLANDYSSUL, CARMARTHEN; Farmer.

Owing to the importation of foreign flour the milling industry has fallen off very considerably in this district, and, in my opinion, if corn was ground in our own mills, it would add both to the health and wealth of the country, imported flour being composed of all sorts of stuff.

S. H. BARKER, ARDRASS HOUSE, CELBRIDGE, KILDARE; Farmer.

If there were more mills working, bran and pollard would be far cheaper, and at a price suitable for feeding for cattle and sheep. But, with so few mills working, they are both nearly as dear as the wheat itself

FORM No. 3,044. Corn and Wheat Offal Merchants and Mixers.

Any duty placed upon foreign feeding flour and offals, &c., will be a serious blow to British cattle reare and feeders.

C. CHAMBERLAIN, CHILTON MILL, HUNGERFORD, BERKS.; Miller.

Millers must have foreign wheat as the English crop cannot be depended on for either quality or quantity; foreign flour is not a necessity, as English millers are before their foreign rivals in the matter of machinery. Russian barley is ground up for meal for pigs.

C. HILL & SON, SPRING VIEW, ECCHINSWELL; Millers, Farmers, &c.

As we are millers, farmers, coal and corn merchants, we wish to say, as regards our line of business, that the foreigner affects us with flour, corn, offal, &c. If we could manufacture more flour with English wheat offal would be more plentiful, cheaper and fresher, and so benefit the buyers; also a good many mills now are closed owing to the foreigner. It would also improve our markets in price if the foreigner would leave us alone, and there would be more corn grown here, more labour and wages given. All manufactured goods should be taxed and raw materials admitted free.

**1737 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Duty on Flour
—continued.

W. LEE, LOW MILL, ALSTON, CUMBERLAND ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

I am not in favour of a tax on raw material of any kind, whether "dumped" below cost or not, but I think a tax on all manufactured goods is necessary, and would stimulate home manufactures. In my line of business, offals would be much cheaper if all the flours, linseed cakes, &c., were manufactured in this country, as there would be a much greater quantity of offals. Farmers and cottagers would be enabled to keep cattle, pigs, &c., at a much less cost. Also a greater number of men would be employed in mills, and in making machinery, if all the milling was done in Britain.

B. SCRUBY, HARBLOW, ESSEX ; Farmer and Miller.

Corn should come in free and all raw material, but there should be 2s. a sack on flour and all manufactured goods. I leave the suggested duty to better judges than myself : I think if worked well, the working class can be got to go right for it. I do not think flour would be 1d. dearer, but very likely cheaper ; we are not taxing the article, we want the corn to be sent into this country free, and as much as they will send, the more the better, but let us make our own flour, as this helps us to keep stock, and the stock helps to pay the rent, and the manure the stock gives us returns to us a great yield of corn and roots per year, and if the American does not manure his land well he cannot make farming pay, and he cannot make manure unless he keeps his stock in a yard, and if kept in a yard they must call on the miller for cheap middlings, but if they are not cheap, the manure costs more money. Let us try and grow twice as much as the foreigner on the same acreage of ground and then we can beat him, if he only grows £3 worth of good produce and we grow £6 per acre, who is the best man ? The manure is at the bottom of success. If flour was made in England, we should be able to feed stock much cheaper, and, therefore, go in for more ; the millers would also require more hands and the farmer more men ; all the killing would be done at home, so there would have to be more butchers. The farmer would have the manure for his land, and by keeping more stock a lot of land now out of cultivation would be required. If the foreigner can afford to fat or rear cattle, and you can get us fair play, the English farmer can do the same. I don't think the agricultural farmer would benefit myself, because, if we get fair play, all the factories, mines and workshops, will be very busy doing the work the foreigner is now doing, and the men will be more independent and will require more money, and get it, as there will be plenty of work. It means that there will be a great deal of building, factories, mills, &c., as if we do more work we must have more room. We don't want to tax any foreign goods, but if they tax us, we must tax them, we want and must have fair play. I was talking to a big man in the glass trade and he says it is awful, that he has to buy nearly all foreign goods now as the foreigners have cut our English manufacturers out of it ; and why ? Because the foreigner will work for a quarter of the wage.

FORM No. 2,615. Millers.

Wheat, free ; flour, 2s. sack. English wheat would benefit, but not sufficiently.

J. EWING, MILL OF DUEN, PORTSOY ; Miller.

I have no certain information, but would approve of a tariff to be put on manufactured oatmeal, and on flour, distinct from the free import of marketable bare grain.

WM. BAILEY & EXORS. OF LATE T. WORTHINGTON, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER.

During the year that the 1s. per cwt. was on imported flour (i.e. war tax), the amount of imported flour dropped quite 10% and has never recovered, as previous to that year my figures would have been (a) 60% ; (b) 40%. Of course I do not guarantee the correctness of these figures as it would be a tremendous lot of trouble to get at them properly, but these are my estimates.

FORM No. 6,123. Miller.

As a trade I consider we do not require any protective duty. But all foreign produce, of whatever kinds, should bear its joint share of local and Imperial taxes. (a) A duty on imported flour would make flour milling a much better trade, but would probably lead to more acute home competition, and a reduction in milling profits would have to be put against any rise caused by a duty. (b) No doubt. (c) Cannot tell. (d) Certainly increase. (e) Probably increase wages.

F. A. MEAD, CLIFFORD HILL MILLS, NORTHAMPTON ; Flour Millers and Corn Merchants.

Flour, 10s. per ton. Raw materials, free. This would not affect the home market to any appreciable extent as competition would adjust prices. It would also cause more mills to be erected, and reduce cost of production. Increased employment, and increased wages would follow. We want a small duty on manufactured goods, and raw material to come free. Then we can defy the whole world in competition. English wheat is less and less cultivated every year, and if something is not soon done to encourage the English farmers to grow more it will become extinct. In 1902 when the small registration fee was put on our sales increased, but since that duty has been taken off they have fallen off about £4,300 in 1903 and are still falling off, and I shall have to reduce my staff accordingly.

S. K. KEYES, DAREN FLOUR MILLS, DARTFORD, KENT ; Miller.

In any duty upon wheat and flour imposed, care should be taken to make flour bear more duty than wheat as the latter is raw material. The late duties were 3d. cwt. on wheat, and 5d. cwt. on flour. If 3d. per cwt. were again imposed, that on flour should be at least 9d. or 10d. The freight on wheat from all countries is about 56% less than that on flour in bags, and it would benefit this country to import wheat and have it ground here. It would mean more labour, more feeding stuffs, and any profits on the manufacture would bear income tax, local burdens, &c. A duty upon foreign flour would be borne by the foreigner, for if he added the duty to the price, the English miller would secure his trade. All duties should be imposed on those goods which can be made this side of the tariff wall, so that our manufacturers could compel the foreigner to pay part or all the duty ; whereas the duty on tea, tobacco, coffee, sugar,

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etc., is all paid by the consumer, as no one can produce these articles here. The larger the quantity of flour made here, the cheaper it can be produced, as rent, rates, taxes, &c., are spread over a larger output. A duty on flour would not raise the price of bread, as the English miller can make flour equal to the foreigner if he has the wheat free. Any duty on foreign wheat would probably mean increasing the price of flour, although not necessarily, if India, Canada and other Colonies sent theirs free. Increased employment and wages would certainly follow if flour were made here instead of abroad. A duty should be put on flour. I understand American flour is placed upon the London market below the price it is sold in the town where it is made. Flour milling is a trade of special importance to this country, and should be helped by a tariff. When wheat is ground here the by-products, bran, sharps, &c., are of great advantage to stock raisers. At present one million tons of flour are imported. The by-products of this in the shape of sharps and bran would, if the wheat were ground here, amount to about 400,000 tons and would produce a large quantity of beef, bacon, eggs, cheese, butter, &c., &c., and also fertilize the land.

FORM NO. 121. Farmer and Miller.

Corn and flour milling suffer in this country by reason of the amount of imported manufactured flour, the offals of which feed cattle and pigs, which arrive here as beef and bacon. The millers are only able to supply offals (bran and sharps) from the quantity of flour they sell, this keeps feeding stuffs dear. There are plenty of mills to manufacture all the flour required if foreign wheat was free and some tax on flour. Then offals from all the flour used would be bought by the feeders at less money, and the trade of milling and production of English beef and bacon could compete with any other country.

J. POCKLINGTON, ROLLER MILLS, LOUTH ; Miller and Coal Merchant.

A duty of 2s. or 3s. per sack of 280 lbs. on foreign flour would benefit the British inland miller and the British farmer, both having suffered from unfair competition. It will be a national disaster if we cease to grow wheat. Farmers should by some means be encouraged to grow and millers to buy and use wheat. The inland miller is the farmer's and nation's friend. Consumers should demand flour made from English wheat. To double our acreage of wheat would be the best remedy against danger of food supply in time of war. I am not in favour of taxing wheat in any case, except a small duty for revenue purposes.

BLACKWELL BROS., HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN ; Corn Merchants, &c.

The free importation of grain does not affect us, but if a tax were put on imported flour, farmers and millers would benefit.

J. PATTINSON & SON, WHITEHAVEN ; Millers and Corn Merchants.

If a small tax of say, 1s. per 280lbs. = 8s. per ton, was put on foreign flour, it would not only help the English miller by enabling him to work his mill full time, but would also assist the farmer, as the miller would have more offals to dispose of. This would mean that the farmer would be able to buy cheaper.

J. ROGERS, STORE SHALFORD AND PAPERHAM MILLS, STONY STRATFORD ; Miller.

On foreign flour coming into this country put a good duty, and then we should make it here and employ thousands more men.

J. ELSTON, BATHEASTON FLOUR MILLS, BATH ; Miller.

Thousands of flour mills have had to be closed through foreign competition. Wheat should be taxed, and flour from foreign countries should have a tax of 4s. per sack of 280lbs. ; all wheat from our Colonies to come in free. This would give a great advantage to farmers in having offals much cheaper, and give employment to thousands more of our millers and mills.

FORM NO. 2,502. Miller.

I believe a tax on foreign flour would benefit our industry, and would not raise the price, as we should have the raw material, wheat, instead.

FORM NO. 2,613. Miller.

On flour, 2s. per sack of 20 stones. This would secure a better demand for wheats on our own country markets ; the same with barley for malting. All flour imported to this country should be taxed and other meal in accordance, allowing grain to come in free to be manufactured by British labour.

HIPWELL & SONS, STOKE MILLS, SHARNBROOK, BEDS. ; Millers and Corn Merchants.

The duties we suggest would be flour, 2s. 6d. per sack, or 1s. 4d. per cwt., and wheat 1s. per qr. We believe that a small subsidy on the growth of English wheat, or even an exemption from rates, or both, would do a good deal to extend the acreage. Thousands of acres are at present growing nothing, which ought to be producing wheat and straw. Such land will not grow good pasture but will produce good crops of wheat, beans and oats if sufficient encouragement could be given to cultivate it. Our production of wheat wants bringing up to half our consumption. We do not think it would add to price of wheat, but would keep out foreign flour and cause all foreign wheat to be ground here, thus bringing in the bran and other offal which are wanted both by farmers and working men at a cheaper rate than at present. It would certainly lead to more employment in the milling trade, and as 20 cwt. wheat makes only 14 cwt. flour, it would increase the tonnage of grain imported by 20 cwt. wheat for every 14 cwt. flour displaced. The lowest priced and worst American flour is dumped in London for what it will fetch, and a proportion of better flours as well. French flour is also dumped into London and the South of England at what would be a loss but for the system of "acquits," which practically work out a bounty of, as we are informed, 1s. a sack on all exported from France. The amount of duty we suggest would put a stop to this kind of thing, and a surtax in addition should be put on to countervail the effect of any bounty arising from the French system.

**1745 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

FORM No. 3,263.

Duty on Flour
—continued.

Wheat flour is imported and placed on the English markets at less cost than English flour, the foreigner detaining the offals, i.e., bran and sharps. My business has been chiefly amongst farmers, the farmer having to pay 9d. to 10d. per stone for the offals, and only making 8½d. per stone of English wheat. I would strongly advise 3s. per sack on foreign flour and thus give the English miller and farmer a chance to live as well as our competitors across the sea.

FORM No. 2,685. Miller.

Flour and other manufactured food stuffs from grain—2s. per cwt. It would induce the cultivation of more wheat, caused by greater demand from millers who are undersold, and give very much more employment to them. To give an instance: I am on a small stream which runs perhaps 12 miles, and as many as 8 flour mills are on it. 30 years ago all of these mills manufactured some flour, to-day, I feel I can say with certainty, not one of these mills (except my own) makes a sack per week, only a little grist work, consequently no demand for flour. The import of foreign flour is the chief cause. Wheat need have very little duty put on, say 1s. per qr. Flour should bear the burden, and all articles that are manufactured from foreign grain should pay higher duties, thus providing greater employment at home.

J. FOWLER, EAST AND WEST MILLS, BRIDPORT; Miller.

Flour—2s. per cwt. (a) It would not raise the price of bread if wheat was let in free, but would lower the price of bran and pollards which would benefit stock feeders. (b) Would undoubtedly secure more regular run of trade and prosperity to the milling industry. (d) Would increase employment. (e) With better wages for employees, and more interest on capital invested. Decidedly I do. Put a duty of 5s. a sack on imported flour. Any wheat meal, barley meal, maize meal, oatmeal, or anything similar imported into this country should be taxed; let in the raw material free, but put a prohibitory duty on the manufactured article. I think also a duty on foreign wheat of, say, 2s. a qr., but let in wheat from India and our Colonies duty free.

FORM No. 2,849. Millers and Corn Merchants.

Flour and offals, 5%. (a) Prices in the home market would be so little affected as to be imperceptible. (b) The duty would give greater security to the home trade. (c) The greater the production the less would be the cost in proportion. Employment would be increased with increased production. (e) Wages would be increased because of the increased demand for skilled and other workmen. We are of opinion that special measures would prevent such importation, and that these measures should be the imposing of a duty.

A. SUMMERTON, TRYSULL, NEAR WOLVERHAMPTON, STAFF.; Baker, Corn Factor and Grist Miller.

I consider that no foreign flour should come in this country without being heavily taxed. What we want is the wheat which would employ British milling and mean cheaper offals for feeding purposes.

C. H. WITHERINGTON & SON, SONNING MILLS, NEAR READING, BERKS.; Millers.

Flour—3s. per sack of 2½ cwt. Offals, such as toppings, pollard, brans—9d. per cwt. (a) Price of wheat would rise 1s. 6d. to 3s. per quarter. (b) With less foreign competition in flour, millers would be able to make a profit, so as to enable them to run their mills continuously. At present, profits are cut to ruination by foreign competition. (c) Do not consider a duty would reduce cost of production. (d) Would certainly increase employment if the foreign manufactured articles such as flour, &c., were taxed heavily. (e) And of course, increase wages. A higher duty should be put upon all manufactured articles than upon the raw material, and steps should most decidedly be taken to prevent dumping.

W. LINGWOOD, BARNINGHAM, BURY ST. EDMUNDS; Flour Miller.

Yes, 2s. per sack on flour.

G. J. BUTCHER, MANNINGFORD MILL, PEWSEY, WILTSHIRE; Miller.

Flour from America is placed on our markets below our manufacturing price. All manufactured goods, besides flour, should be taxed equivalent to the cost of man's labour, but everything in its raw or whole state should be free.

WHITWORTH BROS., WELLINGBOROUGH; Flour Millers.

(a) Just enough to ensure a profit. (b) Our trade would be secured, and the public fed on a better and no dearer article. (c) It would reduce cost of production because our mills would run full time. (d) Many more hands would be employed. (e) Wages would naturally increase. 1s. per sack on flour over that on wheat would ensure work to our employees.

E. F. YOUNGMAN, WORTHAM MILLS, DISS, NORFOLK; Miller.

The late duty on wheat made me very busy, but the year did not turn out much better; owing probably to preparing for a rise which did not come. A small duty on foreign flour, even 1s. per sack, would make all millers busy.

DEWING & KERSLEY, WELLS, NORFOLK; Millers.

Flour—1s. per cwt., with a duty on foreign wheat at 2s. a qr. The above to be increased in proportion to tax on foreign wheat. (a) Flour would not be appreciably affected in price; with unlimited power and keen competition, increased margin of profit would not be obtained to any extent. (b) This would certainly be obtained, would be of great value and make business premises a more valuable security which, at the present moment, they are not, and cause much anxiety, and waste for depreciation and prospective loss. (c) The more regular the production, the lower the cost. (d) Employment

1746

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1748

will be increased in proportion to the quality manufactured. (c) There is plenty of room for it. The production of our daily bread, from all its various stages, means low pay, long hours, and less recreation than any other one thing supplied to the human race. As regards dumping, a small duty will do all that is required. It is extraordinary to us that it is necessary to argue this question at all, and to the writer in particular, having worked for 2 years in the Australian Colonies under protection. We give the foreigner every facility and ask no questions. The home producer has to maintain his country, educate the children, frequently for the benefit of foreign countries, conduct his business under Home Office restrictions, and do what business he can under the circumstances, and be thankful. The increasing use of foreign wheat and the decreasing supply of English is transferring the milling trade from the country to the port towns; the disadvantage of this tendency is generally agreed politically and socially.

J. WEBSTER WICKHAM, ALBOUNE MILL, HASSOCKS; Miller, &c.

Flour—3s. per sack, or less; foreign offal—10s. per ton. (a) Flour and bread would not be any dearer, for if the other countries have a surplus, they must take the market price for what they send us. (b) More offal would be made by our home millers, and, therefore, the British farmer would get it cheaper; on account of such a quantity of foreign flour coming in, we lose the offal of wheat, which we ought to grind ourselves. (d) In this neighbourhood a great many country mills have been shut up, therefore the men do not find employment and drift away. (e) More wages would be earned both by the men and by other tradesmen, such as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carters, millwrights, &c., as horses, vans and machinery are not now wanted. I should like to see a duty on manufactured articles which come in, and which we could manufacture ourselves, thereby giving our own workmen work to do, but allow the raw material, in most cases, to come in free of duty for us to work on. Local rates are rising at a rapid pace, and will do so all the time we allow the other countries to send us their surplus below cost, on which they pay no rates, and also send us their scum for us to keep. It will be seen by the papers that half of our police court cases refer to foreigners.

GREENWOOD & Co., ROCKCLIFFE VALE CORN MILLS, BACUP; Millers.

Flour from wheat—2s. 6d. per sack of 280 lbs. (a) We do not think prices would rise very much, as the supply would soon be met or increased by new mills being built. (b) A feeling of greater security would be felt in the trade of milling. (c) The cost of production would be less. (d) An increased demand for labour (e) Increased demand means increased wages. We are in favour of the raw material wheat, &c., coming in free, but the manufactured article, flour, &c., to be taxed.

BOWYER & PRIESTLEY, OFFORD AND BUCKDEN MILLS, HUNTINGDON; Millers.

At least 2s. per sack on foreign flour, and 5s. per ton on offals, and 1s. per quarter on wheat. (a) Small duty, as suggested, would make but little difference in prices in the home market. (b) Would give English a slight advantage over foreign millers. (c) By doing a larger trade at a trifle less cost. (d) Consequently in increasing employment at home. (e) Possibly an increase of wages. This may apply to France, where bounties are given on flour exported. The freight on wheat from abroad in bulk is much less than that on flour in sacks. If a small duty were put on imported flour to turn the scale in favour of the home miller, he could supply all required, or, at any rate, a much larger proportion, the baker could be supplied as cheaply as at present, and all the extra offals would be for the good of the stockraiser. Many free traders I have spoken to agree regarding a small duty on flour owing to the production of the valuable by-products, during its manufacture, all of which are lost to this country when flour is imported instead of wheat. In any arrangement I presume India would be treated as a Colony, and her wheat allowed in free, especially as she has this year filled a serious gap caused by the indifferent crops of Canada and the U.S.A. Of course there would be a duty on imported Colonial flour, although, perhaps, 25, 30 or 50 % less than that from foreign states, as I might point out that a duty on foreign wheat and free importation of Colonial flour would mean a worse position to home millers than now.

I. H. WITHERS, TOWER MILLS, LONGPARISH, WHITCHURCH, HAMPSHIRE; Miller.

If a duty had been put on the manufactured flour imported 20 years ago, the water stone mills would this day have been in a far better state. We cannot do without the virgin soil foreign wheat, the English wheat is losing its strength year by year, and after a wet season, we must buy a lot of foreign wheat to mix with our English wheats. The duty on corn just taken off, made a much better feeling and life in our trade, and I am certain this dumping must be put a stop to or our mills must close.

C. R. SMITH & SONS, LTD., PORTSLADE-BY-SEA, BRIGHTON; Flour Millers.

Experience alone will determine the duty; say 1s. per sack duty were placed on flour, what is to hinder the American miller from imposing this on his home trade, and so keeping the export trade free, and so on until the American consumer might "kick"? Nothing but a duty will prevent dumping, and a duty from 1s. to 5s. per quarter should be imposed. (a) This would entirely depend upon the harvests of the world, given good harvests, the duty would have no effect. (b) Bad, as it would be well known that, if the Liberals got into power, duties would be removed. (c) No sane miller would risk his money for an increased plant on above speculation. (d) No sane miller would risk his money for an increased plant on above speculation. (e) Wages would certainly advance if millers could be induced to put in extra machinery as the supply of milling operatives is very small now.

FORM No. 4,938. Millers and Flour Manufacturers.

6d. per cwt. on manufactured flour above the duty on wheat. I should like to state here that the 2s. per quarter suggested by Mr. Chamberlain as to wheat, is a very small amount; a 10s. duty would only mean 1d. for 4-lb. loaf if all foreign wheat were used. One quarter or 504 lbs. of wheat will make at the least 120 4-lb. loaves of bread (when manufactured into flour), but considering that with the home grown and the

1753

**Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour****Duty on Flour**
—continued.

wheat from the Colonies coming in free, only about 50 % of the wheat used would be taxed, therefore a 10s. duty would only mean 4d. per 4-lb. loaf. Mr. Chamberlain's tariff reform, that is a duty on all manufactured flour, would do us good and allow us to employ more men and pay higher wages. (a) The price would go up. (b) Improvement in home trade would mean more employment and better wages and conditions for men. (c) Cost of production about the same. (e) Wages would increase.

H. DENYER, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, CARSHALTON; Miller.

I think if a duty of 15 % were put upon foreign flour, and the raw material (wheat) came in free, we could compete. I make an allowance for the offal becoming cheaper in consequence of more being manufactured at home. The latter would greatly benefit the small farmer, who could keep his pigs and cattle much cheaper. At the present time we are selling half foreign-made flour.

FORM No. 5,011. Flour Millers.

Flour—2s. per sack. (a) A small duty on flour would not increase prices to any appreciable extent. (b) It would improve home trade, as in this district there is much more foreign flour used than home-made. (c) Cost of production would be slightly decreased. (d) More men would be employed. (e) The employment of more men would tend to increase wages.

1754

F. PEARSE & SON, THARSTON MILLS, BY LONG STRATTON, NORFOLK; Millers.

Should like to see 2s. 6d. to 3s. per sack on foreign flour. It would not make any difference to the price as more wheat would come in. All manufactured goods ought to be taxed. We have enough mills and men to make what is consumed here.

JAMES HODSON, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, ROBERTSBRIDGE, SUSSEX; Miller.

I can only express the hope that the points connected with the revival of our industry by manufacturing at home a large proportion, if not all, of the flour now imported (the makers of which at present pay neither rates, taxes or anything else towards the old country excepting rail carriage and freight) will be forcibly placed before the public, viz., that the change will conduce to the welfare of many more trades—engineers, iron-founders, leather and sack makers, builders of all kinds of haulage—and above all the employment of many more men in the trade itself; also from an agricultural point of view more offal for feeding purposes.

FORM No. 5,931. Miller and Farmer.

American and all foreign flour which has been pouring into our country for some years free, should, I consider, pay a duty, and so help to reduce taxation here. We have been playing the one-sided game long enough. We want fair trade all round.

1755

FORM No. 5,955. Flour Millers.

Wheat—free; Flour—1s. per cwt. (a) Would not affect price of wheat flour. (b) Beneficial. (c) Considerable reduction. (d) More hands would be required. (e) Greater demand for skilled labour.

W. B. MARRIOTT, FISKERTON, R.S.O., Notts.; Miller and Corn Merchant.

We can take care of ourselves, but a 2s. 6d. duty per 280 lbs. of flour would largely increase the quantity of offals in the country, and thus tend to make the feeding of stock more remunerative. (a) The price of flour would be very little affected, but offals would be lower. (b) Tend to develop the growing of wheat, which is the only practicable method of providing food in war times. (c) Not much alteration, as it is already at a minimum. (d) Many more men would be employed: (1) in manufacture; (2) in distribution; (3) in providing machinery, sacks, carriages, horses and (e) From above naturally much more would be spent in wages. Dumping from U.S.A. is not as common now as years ago, but flour is commonly sent here at a less price than is charged on the American markets.

T. MARTIN & SON, ROLLER FLOUR MILLS, DURHAM; Millers.

Assuming the proposal of 2s. a quarter on wheat to become established, we should say 2s. 6d. a sack (280 lbs.) on flour would be sufficient protection for the English miller. (a) Wheat and flour would certainly rise by same amount as duty imposed. (b) All the flour used in England would be made at home. The trade would certainly be secured for the English miller. (c) We cannot see how it would affect the cost of production either way, up or down. (d) Certainly increased employment for operative millers. We are of opinion that English millers are recapturing the home trade without any protection, but with an advantage of no more than 6d. or 1s. a sack, this would be accomplished much sooner, and all the flour consumed in the country would be milled at home. It would not be a benefit to master millers as they run fierce competition with each other, but more capital would be put in mills, and we should want more millers and millwrights. It is very difficult to know what is your competitor's cost price, so many circumstances such as position and transit give him a pull over you, and may enable him to sell at a price, which, leaving him a profit, would entail a loss to you.

1756

H. J. LEA, BRERETON MILL, HOLMES CHAPEL, CHESHIRE; Corn Miller and Merchant.

Flour, meal and all imported manufactured food for cattle—10 %. (a) I do not think prices could be very materially affected, for by admitting grain at a reduced rate the foreign manufacturer must of necessity reduce his price in order to meet the home manufacturer. (b) By finding more employment. (c) Would reduce cost of production, as turnover would be greater. (d) Increase employment by doing more trade. (e) Cannot see how this can be done unless there was a scarcity of labour, in which case more wages would have to be paid.

1757

C. CHAMBERLAIN, CHILTON MILL, HUNGERFORD, BERKS.; Miller.

Flour, 3s. per sack (280 lbs.); wheat, raw grain and offals, free. From my knowledge of the British farmer, his idea is that to protect him in growing wheat he would require at least 10s. per quarter, but it is altogether impracticable. (a) There should be no advance in prices as the raw material would come in free. (b) We should grind all our flour at home, and also, which is a great item, have the offals for cattle feeding, whereas now the wheat ground in other lands produces offals to feed foreign cattle, which, in their turn, are to compete with English meat. (c) The same. (d) Instead of the employment of foreign labour to produce our flour consumption, we should employ home labour; with regard to shipping and dock labour, the employment would be the same, or, instead of handling the manufactured articles, they would obtain employment through the handling of the raw material; the same thing applies to the distribution in the Metropolis and other centres. (e) There would be more competition for labour.

W. SILSBY, PRINCES RISBOROUGH; Miller.

I am only a small miller, but 20 years' ago the 6 small mills in this district, within a mile of each other, used to make 2,300 sacks of flour a week, now the 6 mills do not make 10 sacks between them, some are shut up, others work part of the time on gristing for farmers and pig foods; the consequence is there is something like a famine for wheat offals during the summer and autumn months, and it costs farmers and cottagers a lot more to feed their store and fat pigs, also other live stock. If we had the wheat ground in this country, wheat offals would be more plentiful.

1578

F. A. TALLANT, MIDHURST; Miller.

In 1886 I recognised the necessity of some alteration in our import duties on food stuffs; but continued to work the mill till 1900, spending large sums on machinery. The whole of my capital has been lost, and I have not now sufficient to work my brickyard properly. I attribute this to the closing of the mill through U.S.A. flour imports. The mill has changed hands three times since I left it. I had it for 22 years.

J. W. PARKES, EAGLE FLOUR MILL, BIRMINGHAM; Flour Manufacturer.

I am much in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's scheme. For my own business and in my own interest I should prefer that no duty was placed on foreign flour for these reasons:—Milling in this country, after being for some years much behind Hungary and America, is now well in front of all, and having at present an unlimited supply of wheat, we are well able to compete. America is now out of the running; she is high in price, and quality of late years has gone down. Hungarian flour also has lost the high position it held 20 to 30 years ago. Though competition in England is to make better quality, and we have gone on improving for years, at the same time Hungary and America have tried to meet the competition by lowering the price, in doing which the quality has been lowered as well. The effect of a duty on flour, if more than 1s. per sack, would be to cause a large number of mills to be put up, and present mills to be extended, and the increased make would in a comparatively short time be more than equal to what the present import is, when the competition would be as bad, and more likely worse than it now is, because it would be permanent, at present it is intermittent. Not only so, millers thousands of miles away are handicapped in dealing here; also, mills likely to be erected to meet the demand caused by a duty would, no doubt, be similar to present extensions, viz., limited liability company undertakings. I should prefer flour not taxed, and if taxed, not more than 6d. to 1s. at the outside on a sack of 280 lbs. I think it would be best to let flour come in free. Sixpence would help us a good deal without attracting a lot of capital into the trade to make an over-production; in fact, the little preferential difference between the late duty on wheat and flour, whereby flour paid about 2½d. per sack more than the proportion out of wheat, decidedly helped us, and twice that much would help us a great deal. Ours is a finely-cut trade, and though we expect to get 1s. per 280-lb. sack, net profit, we often have to work for 6d. per sack, and 6d. extra on the top of either of these profits would be quite satisfactory, because the quantity made is large, and trade will not now bear more than a moderate profit. In my case put it the other way about, and 2s. per sack would be all I would ask put on imported flour, and I think that would stop it. We work for 1s. per sack, net profit, and we are fighting these so close now, that we should be satisfied with 2s. on 280 lbs. for duty.

1759

J. GUNN, GOLSPIE MILLS, GOLSPIE, N.B.; Oatmeal Miller.

I trade in flour, and feel that I am handicapped by corners or combines. For example a few days before the duty was taken off grain and flour, flour was raised 1s. 6d. per sack, and a few days later another 1s. per sack was added to the price. All in the trade know that supplies were kept short so that foreigners would be no losers by removal of the duty. The U.S.A., in my opinion, have so much power in this way, that unless a check is put on them, traders in this country will continue to suffer. I would suggest a duty of 1s. to 3s. per quarter on grain and proportionately on other cereal food stuffs, meal, flour, &c.

1760

C. MARSTON, ROLLER MILLS, EARSHAM, NORFOLK, AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK; Millers, &c.

I suggest an import duty on foreign flour, 1s. per cwt.; foreign maize, barley, 3d. per cwt.; foreign bacon 1d. per lb. (which equals, upon ordinary weight pig, 10s.). This I do not consider at all excessive, and would stimulate the home production of bacon, for our farmers could as easily produce 1,000,000 lbs. of bacon as they do now 1,000 lbs., provided they could do so profitably. As an alternative proposition, I suggest that every person who deals in this country in any article of foreign production, should take out a license for the same to be procured at the Post Offices (to save cost of collection); the amount of license duty to be graduated according to the particular article dealt with. This would affect nearly every business man, and produce a revenue which would be most beneficial ultimately to the home producer. Steps should also decidedly be taken to prevent dumping. (a) The effect on the consumer would be infinitesimally small and scarcely be felt. (b) It would secure the trade being carried on on a much more solid and secure foundation. (c) The cost of production would be reduced proportionately to the great increase in home trade likely to arise. (d) Employment would be increased proportionately and wages (e) would be also increased

**1761 Proposed Duty on
Corn and Flour**

Duty on Flour
—continued.

all round because of the greater demand for production. The duty of 3d. per cwt. on foreign grain, and 5d. per cwt. on imported foreign flour, should never have been taken off. Its effect on the home consumer was not noticed. Its effect on the offals (bran supers, &c.) was of great advantage to the farmer because of its reduction in price. Its effect on my trade was most beneficial, as is shown by the increase in sales in 1903 over previous years. (N.B.—The increase in 1902-03, whilst the tax was on—was from £2,000 to £4,000.) Of course with the increased sales my labour bill and bill for railway charges rose correspondingly. The duty on bacon and meat would have a better effect than a duty on flour or wheat, because a farmer could then turn his corn into meat and the manure would then return to the land for the next growing crop, and the money would be spent correspondingly for labour so employed and all would receive a benefit.

F. R. PERRY, HENLEY GROVE, BRUTON ; Farmer, Miller and Corn Merchant.

If all the mills and milling plant were at work we could grind all foreign as well as British wheat and manufacture same into flour instead of encouraging the foreigner to do this. Offals would then also be about half the price they are at present. By so doing we should also be keeping the best men with brains, viz., engineers, millwrights, builders, millers, and the best skilled working men, at home, together with the wages earned by them, which would to a great extent be spent here, benefiting all classes of the community.

FORM No. 3,291. Millers.

Let all raw material come in free as the air we breathe, but tax the manufactured article so as to give increased employment to our own countrymen. Special measures should be used to prevent dumping, by duties or taxes on manufactured goods.

W. T. WHEELER, BAGE MILL, MADLEY, HEREFORD ; Miller and Farmer.

Let all wheat and all raw goods come in free, but ready manufactured goods be taxed. This will mean the employment of many thousands of our people in this country, and will much improve all trades and occupations. Let us trade together as one big family and be an independent self-supporting empire.

Other Suggestions

J. POWELL, LOWER WICK, WORCESTER ; Farmer.

Following the precedent of the time when the 1s. per qr. duty existed, the price of corn will not be appreciably affected by a 2s. duty, but offals were then sold at 20s. per ton less money, and this was a great advantage. Millers will unquestionably gain by the flour duty. Why maize should be exempt from duty nobody can understand. The idea of the labourer and his pig is a myth. If he can get sharps same price as maize, he will not buy the latter. Why should brewers have the privilege of using maize duty free ? And this they will do to a greater extent than now, and barley-malt beer will be a thing of the past. Everyone who has used maize knows it is the most indigestible of all foods, and if fed at all in excess will quickly show the result in the unhealthy state of the animals. Again, why put an imposition on the cultivation of beans and peas as food for animals—for superior foods—by allowing maize to come free—at 32s. to 36s. per qr. These can be grown at a profit, and as beneficially as rotation crops preparatory for wheat. If Mr. Chamberlain wishes to help the big brewers and horse owners, and injure the agricultural industry, by all means let maize come in free.

J. IDIENS, EVESHAM, WORCESTER ; Farmer.

A 2s. duty would not be sufficient to bring back to cultivation very large tracts of clay land that have been laid down to grass. I favour an import duty on hops—also foreign flour. Tax all imported hay, which, in my opinion, would benefit farmers having clay land more than the 2s. duty on wheat. An advance in the price of hay would mean that money would be expended in the purchase of basic slag, and poor clay lands laid down to pasture could be brought to a high state for fertility for grazing purposes. Hay and clover at the present time are worth about 40s. to 50s. per ton.

C. E. BARRITT, MALDON, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The proposed duty on corn will not affect the price much ; wheat cannot be grown in this country to get a fair profit under 40s. per qr. Any duty is more than discounted by the preferential railway rates given to foreign produce. This destroys any advantage we might have in being near the market ; and these rates should be equitably adjusted by Parliament, as the railways hold a monopoly under the State. I should like the duty put on for revenue purposes, and it might be applied for the relief of the farmer in local rates, which press very heavily on the agricultural industry. My local rates last year were about 4s. per acre.

R. J. HOSKINS, BEARD HILL FARM, SHEPTON MALLET, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

As a Conservative Somerset dairy farmer, my opinion is the 2s. tax on barley will completely cripple the pig-grazing industry in Somerset, which is one of the most paying departments of the farmer who makes cheese, and has his whey to dispose of to the best advantage. The pig is essentially the rent-payer of the Somerset dairy farmer, and to put 1s. duty on a sack of barley without a tax on imported foreign bacon will simply ruin the cheese maker and pig grazier. If 1s. per sack duty is put on barley and foreign bacon not taxed, it will cost the farmer 5s. more to graze a pig to 8 score, or 3s. 6d. more to make 1 cwt. of bacon than it does now. If a farmer uses 600 sacks of meal per annum in pig grazing, which I have done, how is this £30 duty to be made up ? Bacon curers will not allow you to use maize to graze with, as it makes the bacon both soft and yellow ; they can easily detect it, and lower the price of your pigs accordingly ; they send out memoranda to that effect. Both bacon and barley ought to be taxed, or neither.

HERBERT KING, BROOM, BIGGLESWADE ; Farmer.

Any increase in price must necessarily be of benefit to us, when the chief difficulty is that present prices are considerably below cost of production, but the proposed duty is too low, and should, in my opinion, be

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put on Colonial produce too, say half the amount, thus giving the Colonies a very substantial preference. All manufactured articles should have more than a corresponding duty put on. Potatoes and all brine vegetables must come on the list, indeed my idea would be to tax all we could ourselves grow, hoping to compete on equal terms with foreign productions, and let in free all that we cannot grow ourselves. All manufactured goods, etc., provided they be made from what we might grow and manufacture at home, should be more heavily taxed.

H. CRANFIELD, BUCKDEN, HUNTINGDON; Farmer.

Why talk of 10 % to other trades, and then to agriculture suggest so much a qr., the price and weight of which is so varied? The prices of the commodities we produce are governed by the world's surpluses, and a 10 % duty all round (after allowing for fluctuations during transition) would not affect prices in any degree. On the other hand a revenue would be collected, and if eventually we got free trade with our Colonies, and began to back and develop them, it is fair to presume money would be worth more, and under those circumstances a farmer might hope that his capital would go up in value with it.

W. F. ATKINSON, DUNSBY, BOURNE, Lincs.; Farmer.

I suggest a 5s. duty on maize, no duty on wheat, and a 2s. duty on all other corn, as maize is used very largely for different purposes. It takes the place of beans, oats, wheat and barley too. I am told on good authority that bakers use a good deal of maize flour in the bread and brewers a good deal in place of barley malt, so that if there were a 5s. duty on maize it would help all round. I cannot see where the duty on wheat is going to help us, because 4 out of every 5 years our wheat will not keep, so let the foreigner grow the wheat and let us grow the other corn. Then we should get good bread, bread that would keep, and we should grow corn that would not take so much out of the land, for wheat takes more out of the land than any other sort of corn. Then again, if you tax American wheat and let Canadian come free, I am told that the wheat from Canada has to come through the States. If so, the American will charge them more for bringing it, so as to make the price equal to their own.

1766

W. HENDERSON, COUPAR ANGUS, PERTSHIRE; Farmer.

2s. a qr. would not raise the price of grain here, but it would place us on a footing of more equality with our foreign rivals, whose produce escapes the heavy burdens of taxes and rates we have to carry. The system of milling wheat here would give us cheaper offal. At present I pay almost as much for a sack of bran as I get for a sack of wheat. Much of the grain which comes here is practically bounty-fed by cheap freights on land and sea. The 2s. duty would do a little to equalise this injustice. For instance, suppose two counties here and in one the farmers were relieved of taxation, it would be most unjust, and a severe handicap on the other. With this 2s. duty on foreign grain, the duty taken off our potatoes, and wool entering U.S.A., and free importation of Canadian cattle, farming would undoubtedly go ahead again.

G. H. ACTON, BRIDGEMOUNT, CASTLEBAR, Co. MAYO; Farmer.

Were I to grow an increased quantity of grain on account of an increase of price (which would be possible now in the days of artificial manure and artificial grass seeds without the rotation necessary in the days of farmyard manure), I would be left with a superabundance of straw on hand which would be a drug on the market. I am even at present driven to fatten cattle in stalls for the purpose of making a market for straw. It is the price of beef that controls. If it paid me to stall-feed I would grow more grain for feeding and bedding, and more potatoes, as I would have more of the class of manure necessary for the latter crop.

1767

F. BAMYARD-COLMAN, BRIDGHAM MANOR, EAST HARLING, NORFOLK; Farmer.

In my opinion no alteration of tariff will help us, as farmers, until we have more security of tenure. Cases are still coming to hand where—if the tenant does his land well—the landlord wants the benefit, but if he farms it badly he may stop all his life, if he pays his rent. All land hereabouts could be made to grow 2 or 4 sacks per acre more than it does at present if the tenant had security. Now if you tax corn 2s. per qr. or 1s. per sack, you would benefit me to start with by £100 to £150, but will my landlord let me have it when we make a fresh start?—experience says no. I would like to see foreign barley taxed 4s. instead of 2s.

H. GRANGE, TRING, HEETS.; Farmer.

A 2s. duty on wheat or oats would be a temporary benefit for 10 or 12 years only, until Canada was able to produce a sufficient quantity. Really, from an Imperial point of view, the 2s. ought to be placed on wheat, possibly on oats, but on barley, *no*! No duty should be placed on barley, as the Colonies do not send us 5% of the barley imported, and of the barley imported over 90 % is used for *feeding purposes* and is used largely by the *farmer and grazier*. In addition, a large importation of foreign barley keeps down the price of other feeding stuffs, for the benefit of the British agriculturists. It would also be quite impossible to differentiate between malting and grinding barley as regards duty.

1768

H. J. WALLACE, J.P., GARVAGE, LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

As I feed all the grain I grow to cattle principally making beef, if the cost of production is increased I would require to get a better price for the finished article. Otherwise, I might sell my oats and buy maize and something else to balance up the ratio. I am not, however, in a position to express a decided opinion on this question, but don't see how the farmer could lose and he would probably gain.

H. DAMPNEY, CLOS WORTH (SOMERSET), SHERBORNE (DORSET); Farmer.

I cannot tell. I am rather inclined to think it is too late to endeavour to grow wheat for profit, as the land has gone down to grass, and the labourers have left the land.

1769 Proposed Duty on Corn and Flour

Other Suggestions
—continued.

FORM No. 12,215. Auctioneer, Valuer, &c.

I don't believe in a duty on corn, it can't be carried; the country won't stand it, so it is useless discussing it. A bounty on every acre of land sown to corn paid out of Imperial Exchequer—a reform in education, so that lads can be taught agricultural work at a suitable age and not crammed with knowledge that is useless to them, is in my opinion the only way to assist agriculture. I have farmed in Sussex and Wiltshire and been an agricultural auctioneer for a good many years in Sussex and Shropshire and am used to expressing what I feel. Supposing Colonial corn was admitted free of duty, English farmers would be quite as much swamped as at present.

FORM No. 12,402. Farmer.

The suggested duty of 2s. per qr. would, no doubt, be a good thing, as far as it goes, but it is doubtful whether the price would rise as much in proportion; in fact, one is almost sure it could not.

J. B. CHEVALLIER, DEBENHAM, SUFFOLK; Farmer.

A duty on corn will not help me in the branches of agriculture I am now developing, viz., dairy, poultry breeding and fattening pigs, breeding pedigree meat stock. If a duty were put on corn and prices were higher, I might go back to corn-growing as an industry. (1905: I should like to see the 2s. per quarter duty on corn tried. I do not find poultry or dairying very profitable.)

W. S. LANE, UPTON-ON-SEVERN, WORCESTER; Farmer.

As a purchaser of more corn and meal, &c., than I sell, an all-round duty would injure me; but I anticipate cheaper offals from the preference to the miller, and the free importation of maize would of course suit me. I think oil cakes and maize by-products (maize extract and maize germ meal) should also be duty free.

J. SMITH, MONKTON COURT, HEREFORD; Farmer.

This may be useful, but I could not get any benefit unless hops could be included. When a good crop, the hops from the Continent are sold here at a price which it is impossible to raise them here. The supply of bran and sharps would be larger, and farmers would be able to purchase more reasonably, which would be a great advantage.

W. KILBY, NOTTON, BAENSLEY, YORK; Land and Tenant Right Valuer.

I should recommend a Pure Beer Bill,—beer to be made from malt and hops.

R. RUFFLE, HAVERHILL, SUFFOLK; Miller and Farmer.

I should like to see a duty put on all manufactured goods, letting the unmanufactured come in free, which would give every mechanic a chance to get a living at his own trade at home. A tax on flour would not make bread any dearer. Supply and demand rule prices, which one and all cannot get away from. It does not matter to the consumer what it costs to produce anything; one can only get market price for it. The producer would pay the tax, not the consumer.

J. INGLIS & SONS, MIDLOTHIAN OATMEAL MILLS, LEITH; Corn Merchants and Oatmeal Manufacturers.

All imported food stuffs should be branded sufficiently, distinctly, and sold for what they really are, and none allowed to be sold, wholesale or retail, as being home-grown and manufactured, as many are at present, or mixed into the home article in a greater or less degree.

W. PURVES, CASTLETOWN, THURSO; Farmer, Miller, Cake and Manure Merchant.

Feeding stuffs, such as linseed, linseed cake, bran and others, should be free. Indian corn for feeding should also be free. For making whisky other questions arise, such as the competition with barley. Finally, if something is not done and soon, agriculture will be ruined. There should be free trade between the mother country and Colonies, and reciprocity with foreign nations.

FORM No. 4,602. Corn Miller.

As an instance of the way in which the farmer is oppressed by the present condition of fiscal arrangements, take one phase: I could buy all the grain I require from neighbouring farmers if it were not that I am obliged to buy foreign grain to enable me to compete with other millers.

1770

1771

1772

Proposed 5 % Duty on Meat and Dairy Produce

Beneficial

(L2) PROPOSED 5 % DUTY ON MEAT AND DAIRY PRODUCE.

QUESTION 10 (FORM V.):—*The duty suggested on meat and dairy produce is 5 %, Colonial produce of the same kind free. How far are these duties likely to benefit you in the branches of industry in which you are engaged?*

158 farmers in various parts of the United Kingdom state in general terms that 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would be beneficial. Other answers are as follows:—

S. P. GRAVES, SOUTHAM, RUGBY; Farmer.

This would benefit to the full extent of the 5 %, and make from £10 to £20 yearly difference in profit.

T. J. KENNEDY, KILLENAULE, TIPPERARY; Farmer.

It would be a decided advantage to put 5 % on meat and dairy produce. I am principally in young cattle and sheep, but am also connected with creamery here, and know it would be a great advantage to small farmers, and an inducement to keep them to dairy farming. To me it would mean £50 per year.

J. HUDSON, THE MANOR HOUSE, REIGATE, SURREY; Provision Merchant.

1773

A duty of 5 % on dairy produce will not in the least advance the price to the consumer (Colonial being free). The foreign produce has to compete on our exchange and markets with home and Colonial, the agent sells it at the market value, and in returning sale sends cheque minus duty and his charges, clearly showing that the duty comes out of the pocket of the producer or shipper. It may be said that if a duty is put on foreign produce it will be sent to other markets; but where? Ours is the only one. Russia is now sending weekly vast quantities of all kinds of dairy produce and we are told it is only in its infancy. The produce we are likely to receive from Siberia in the near future will astonish the most sanguine. At the present moment really first-class Siberian butter is selling on our market at 74s. to 78s. per cwt. and being retailed to the public at 10d. per lb. It should not be forgotten that we, with our Colonies, have as great an agricultural area as America, and all commodities coming from our Colonies cost us no more for freight than that received from France or Scotland; the sea is the permanent way, costs nothing and repairs itself.

J. HENDERSON, FENAGH HOUSE, BAGENALSTOWN; Farmer.

The proposed duty should considerably enhance the value of meat and dairy produce, and it would mean an additional profit of £50 a year on my farm.

R. S. GIBB, LAUDER, N.B.; Farmer.

Yearly produce—mutton, 59,000 lbs.; beef, 1,100 lbs.; total, 60,000 lbs. at, say, 7½d., £1,875. 5 % —£94. This would be a considerable benefit if realized. In this case the foreigner would pay the 5 % and prices would not rise much. The beef and mutton supply from the Colonies I do not consider very important or likely to be so, the Argentine Republic and U.S.A. being likely, as at present, to supply the largest quantities. Live stock should be allowed into the country from any State—foreign or Colonial. I have only very slight knowledge of the dairy interest. Occasionally, owing to storms at sea and scarcity of food abroad, farmers would get the benefit of a certain rise in the price of beef and mutton, and also a certain reduction of taxation from the duties paid by the foreigner. These might be estimated or rather guessed at probably £50 in my case, per annum.

1774

F. H. B. SAMPEY, J.P., B.A., T.C.D., WILLSBORO', BALLINLOUGH, ROSCOMMON; Farmer.

This suggested duty would benefit me considerably, 11 small cattle worth £12 each cost 14s. each to market. The percentage proposed would alone increase their value about 10s. each, and consequently reduce their cost to about 4s. It would mean more than this, for the 5 % on Argentine frozen meat would slightly reduce the import of the very rough qualities (now marketed at 24s. per cwt., bed-rock price). This would improve the price of the rough Irish cows now almost unsaleable.

J. T. BUTLER, PRIESTOWN, CO. MEATH; Farmer.

The 5 % duty on mutton would be very little advantage, as most of it comes from the Colonies. However, that is a branch of our trade that apparently wants less protection than any other. It is very different with beef, only a small proportion coming from Colonial sources. It is hard to foresee what the result of the tax would be to us. Some say the foreigner pays all the duty; if that is true, or nearly so, we would only benefit slightly by what small decrease there would be in imports. If, however, the consumer pays the duty it should make a difference of say 15s. per head to cattle, which might make all the difference to us of a profit or loss. Even 19s. a head would be a very great advantage to us, as at present we are buying in a limited market and selling against the whole world.

1775

W. MITCHELL, BESSBOROUGH FARM, PILTOWN, CO. KILKENNY; Farm Manager.

On meat the benefit would probably come to 3 % on sales. On butter it would easily mean 4 % benefit to producers.

P. F. ASTILL, COSSINGTON, LEICESTER; Farmer.

The duty may increase the value of a fat bullock 10s., or 1s. 9d. to 2s. per acre gross increase. It will have no effect on the value of sheep. This slight increase in value will not be eaten up in labour and other expenses.

P. FRAYNE, MAYNOOTH, KILDARE; Farmer.

There should be a duty on meat. It might mean 10s. per head gain on cattle. Butter would improve 5s. per cwt.

1776

W. E. WILLIAMS, CORWEN, MERIONETH; Farmer.

5 % means from 12s. to 18s. on each beast (cattle), and 1s. 6d. on each sheep (whether dead or alive), which, as a matter of fact, must be paid by the foreign producer, through having to sell them to the first buyer at a price less the duty to be paid before being landed in our markets. Now, 15s. and 1s. 6d. per head will represent a large increase in the total value of the cattle and sheep of this country, and thereby encourage breeding, and that without increasing the price of meat to the consumer.

T. JONES, BALLINGLEN, RATHDRUM, CO. WICKLOW; Farmer.

Calculated at 5 % of an advance in price, in cattle rearing and feeding I would benefit with about 40 stores, 10s. each or £20. 20 fat cattle advance of £1 per head, £20. Dairy produce would not signify much, as it would not amount to much more than ½d. per lb.

J. B. WHITWORTH, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE; Farmer and Miller.

I feed about 100 oxen a year and consider it would add 20s. to value of each bullock, and yet the meat we buy would not cost us more money.

Beneficial
—continued.

FORM No. 12,182. Farmer.

I may benefit to the extent of £30 per annum, but the price would be regulated by the supply and demand for foreign produce.

T. DAVIES, NEEDWOOD, BEBINGTON, CHESHIRE; Farmer.

This would help me and others a fair amount, as we should get very little Colonial meat, at least for some time. Therefore, taking £20 beasts at the lairage at Birkenhead, 5 % added to it would put my cattle up quite £1 per head, which would mean difference of profit and loss to my feeding beasts.

J. N. FRYDAY, MANDEMOUNT, DUNDRUM, TIPPERARY; Farmer.

5 % would raise the home produce. They would benefit me in bacon, mutton and butter to the extent of about £40 or £50 per year. Danish butter does us most injury in cutting down the price, owing to glutting the market.

FORM No. 12,835. Farmer.

Any reasonable restriction of free trade would be a benefit to me, and 1s. in the £ on meat and dairy produce would be a decided gain in farming operations. In 100 head of fat cattle it would be a clear gain of from £70 to £80, and I need hardly say this would be a very welcome advantage in the present depression in agriculture.

A. AYLMER, RATHMORE, NAAS, CO. KILDARE; Farmer.

A duty on meat and dairy produce from foreigners would raise prices to a slight degree. If it raised the price of a fat beast 5 % it would mean that a bullock now sold at £15 would fetch £15 15s., and that would be a great benefit. If it only raised the price to £15 10s. it would be a great benefit, and mean £100 a year to the farmer who sold 200 beasts. The price of beef more or less rules the prices of stores, and the benefit would affect all classes of cattle and sheep raisers. If the raising of corn could be stimulated, and Ireland brought back from being a cattle ranch, it would be a benefit to all farmers—everyone would not be in the same branch.

FORM No. 12,890. Farmer.

If this duty were imposed, I would derive at least 15 % more profit on stock and other produce raised on my farm.

D. THOMSON, DUNAVERNY, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM; Farmer.

This would be a great benefit to Ireland. It should be a benefit of 5 % on my income.

JOHN JONES, DINARTH HALL, COLWYN BAY, DENBIGHSHIRE; Farmer.

Mr. Chamberlain's policy will be of immense benefit to the Mother-country and the Colonies, if it is carried out. A duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce, other than from the Colonies, which latter is to be free, will be a great benefit. I have had considerable experience in the meat business, having carried on probably the largest retail meat trade in the English provinces and Wales for the last 40 years. I have also grazed cattle and sheep extensively, and am the largest purchaser of the latter—store and fat—in Wales.

J. COATES, RATHDRUM, WICKLOW; Farmer.

The proposed duty on meat and dairy produce will have a stimulating effect on our marketing of fat cattle and dairy produce. At present we cannot make our industries in these respects pay, and it is due mainly to the great competition to which we are subjected. A small tax, such as is proposed, is a step in the right direction, and it will have the effect of helping us to get a proportionally higher price for our produce.

W. FORRESTER-ADDIE, ESTATE OFFICE, POWIS CASTLE, WELSHPOOL, MONTGOMERY; Estate Agent.

It will help us most materially, and the duty suggested would give a greater impetus to the breeding of stock in the country, and so produce beef on equal terms.

A. W. RUGGLES-BRICE, BRAINTREE, ESSEX; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would be a gain to us, as our home produce at the present time is knocked out of the London market by cheaper rates, cheaper cost of production, and cheaper labour abroad. A duty might be put upon hay from foreign countries.

W. D. KNIGHT, RAPKYN, HORSHAM, SUSSEX; Farmer.

I quite approve of the proposed duty. It would tend to increase the number of cattle grown and killed in this country, and provide more offal, such as fat, to be worked up. Large and increasing quantities of edible fat are imported, which might be provided here. The export trade in the same way, with Holland especially, now declining, might be preserved.

G. L. BOMFORD, OAKLEY PARK, KELLS, CO. MEATH; Farmer.

The proposed duty would be of special benefit to grass fed beef, where the problematic rise in the price of labour and feeding stuffs would not affect the profits to the producer. It would also be of considerable advantage to in-fed beef producers, especially when one takes into account the greater facilities for by-products from mills.

LT.-COL. F. HEARD, J.P., LEHENA HOUSE, CORE, AND CAMIRA, NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY; Farmer.

The above duty would be most beneficial to farmers. All farmers will break down if some protection is not afforded them.

1781

FORM No. 12,469. Farmer.

These duties would benefit me to a fair sum, but I could not guess to what extent. If we are to compete with the foreigner, we want to be put on the same footing with him as regards rent, rates and labour. We should then hear less grumbling.

G. T. JAMES, ESTATE OFFICE, HAMPDEN HOUSE, GT. MISSENDEN; Farmer.

The proposed duties would most undoubtedly greatly assist all farmers who fatten stock, which all real farmers do.

W. HENDERSON, COUPAR ANGUS, PERTHSHIRE; Farmer.

The duty of 5 % would place us on a footing of equality with our competitors without raising the price. Much of the dairy produce coming here is practically "bounty fed," by cheap freight, &c. Dead meat should be fully taxed and cooked meat excluded altogether, as we have no means of inspection. On visiting the Chicago stock yards I was told they counted on getting no profit on the beef they exported chilled; all the profit was made on the offal, such as hides, horns, &c., these being all worked up into leather, soap, &c. As far as possible we should import our beef alive.

HERBERT KING, BROOM, BIGGLESWADE; Farmer.

I shall benefit, in my beef, mutton and pork, to a very large extent. As in a large farm like this, of 1,300 acres (principally gardening), there is a great quantity of waste product which cannot be utilised in any other way than feeding stock, it is obvious that a duty on meat would be of immense benefit to me.

R. H. MARFELL, UPPER LLANCARGO, USK, NEAR NEWPORT, MON.; Farmer.

The proposed duties would be a great advantage, as I derive my income from the rearing and feeding of cattle and sheep.

J. DAVIES, KILLOUGH FARM, NEAR ABERGAVENNY, MONMOUTH; Farmer.

The duties would be a great benefit. We cannot feed stock to have a fair profit to meet the price of imported meat. This is sold in the markets as English; and the cost of our labour and feeding land is very high, and taxes increasing. Local rates have increased 50s. % in 40 years.

W. YOUNG, D.L., BROCKLEY PARK, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND; Farmer.

The proposed duty on meat and dairy produce would be a great benefit to Irish farmers, who are greatly handicapped by the immense importations of butter and dead meat. Besides the loss in the price of mutton, the reduction in the price of wool by 5 % is a great loss to sheep farmers—On my comparatively small farm I lose £200 a year in this article alone—nearly 10s. per acre per annum—in comparison with former years. The small farmer loses heavily by the free importations of low-class American hams and bacon.

WILLIAM FLEMING, AUGHANSILLAGH, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

The benefit of the proposed duty would be equal to a man's wages.

W. S. LANE, UPTON-ON-SEVERN, WORCS.; Farmer.

Free importation of maize, maize by-products and oil cakes on the one hand, and a moderate duty on meat and dairy produce on the other, should place pastoral farmers in a much better position.

M. C. MAGAN, KILLASHEE, LONGFORD; Farmer.

If the duty suggested were imposed, better prices would be obtainable for meat and dairy produce. I should probably spend more money on tillage to produce cattle for dairying and fattening.

R. HUTCHINSON, KELLS, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

These duties will stimulate the rearing and feeding of cattle, and so benefit everyone having an interest in land.

H. BLACKBURN, ANNAT, CORPACH, ARGYLL; Farmer.

The proposed duties would undoubtedly benefit me by quickening the competition for home-grown stock.

THOS. MALLEY, MAAM, GALWAY; Farmer.

The proposed duty should at once be adopted. It would serve this portion of the country as regards price of cattle and sheep which is the chief means of support.

D. M. RATTRAY, BALLYBUNION, KERRY, IRELAND; Farmer.

I would expect a better price for meat and dairy produce. This would help the farmer to till more and give more employment. Store cattle from any country should not be allowed into the U.K.

J. R. CRITCHLOW, WESTON-MERE-FARM, MAER, NEWCASTLE, STAFFS.; Farmer.

This duty on foreign produce, whilst protecting our agricultural industry a little, would not be felt very much by the consumer, and the foreigner would pay some little towards our taxation and for use of our markets which he has had free too long. I believe in all-round free trade, and on principle should impose a small duty on all imports from nations who do not admit our goods free.

1782

1783

1784

J. W. SMITH, THINGHILL COURT, HEREFORD ; Farmer.

The 5 % duty on meat would be an advantage, perhaps to the full 5 %, and an encouragement to grow meat rather than corn. It would tend to enrich and increase the fertility of land generally.

M. W. MORTIMER, ESTATE OFFICE, CULFORD, BURY ST. EDMUNDS ; Farmer.

The duty on meat and dairy produce could not injure the farming industry and would probably tend to raise prices, or as in the case of the duty on corn, help to lower taxation.

GEO. PETRIE, ELGIN, N.B. ; Farmer.

The duty would materially strengthen prices and keep them more at one level. It would stimulate dairy farming.

J. HUTCHEON, LOWER COLLEWISS, TURRIFF, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

I feed cattle largely, and view the proposed tax of 5 % and more as a means of benefiting agriculture. I lay great value on any encouragement given to our dairy department. Anything that favours us directly or indirectly by benefiting our great industries must in the long run benefit agriculture. We want fair play with the foreigner, which for long we have not had, and I strongly favour agriculture being protected and more favoured than has been the practice of Governments heretofore. It will not do to let our greatest and most indispensable industry perish. Bad seasons make farming quite precarious enough without a flood of foreign importation, unchecked on entry into British ports, to compete with.

SIR R. NIGEL F. KINGSCOTE, G.C.V.O., &C., KINGSCOTE, WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE, GLOS. ; Farmer.

This suggestion would certainly help those who, as most do in this neighbourhood, sell beef and mutton. It would also help those who rear stock to sell as stores.

M. WESTROFF, J.P., KILDIMO, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

The suggested tax on meat and butter would be the greatest possible boon to the farmer. While the U.S.A. and other countries are flooding us with meat and butter it is impossible to make farming pay. Before the Americans sent cattle into this country I remember our getting £30 each for fat bullocks which would not now fetch £20 at the most, and those were bought at £4 as calves. We could then rear our calves and make our butter at a profit. We used to get £4 to £5 a firkin for $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cwt.

FORM No. 12,867. Farmer.

A duty on foreign meat, cattle and barley would give a start to struggling farmers. For those that have all-tillage farms, barley is their chance of living. Grass lands here want draining and planting to give litter and dry lie to cattle.

R. BAILEY, VIEWFORTH, CROSS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

These duties would benefit to the extent of 5 % on the amount sold by the British agriculturist at the expense of the foreigner who would have to pay the duty, thus putting the home producer in a more favourable position to compete against the foreigner, who is more favoured by cheap land and better climate.

SAMUEL H. BARKER, ARDEASS HOUSE, CELBRIDGE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The benefit would be great, as beef cannot be produced in this country at the price at which it is selling at present. There is so little dairying that there is always a scarcity of calves, and in consequence they are always too dear. If we had better prices for dairy produce there would be a lot more calves, and hence more stock reared.

J. EVENS, BURTON, NEAR LINCOLN ; Farmer.

These duties would be an advantage to us. Owing to the limited amount of store cattle, and their comparatively higher price, it has become very difficult to graze and feed them at a profit to meet the low price of meat. This low price is caused by open foreign competition.

J. POWELL, LOWER WICK, WORCS. ; Farmer.

This suggested duty must be a great gain to agriculturists generally, but more particularly to those whose farms are not suited by situation or otherwise for selling new milk. Graziers and cattle feeders and breeders too would benefit under the scheme, which they would welcome, as theirs has been a sorry business of late.

O. PRICE, NANTYHARN CRAY, BRECON ; Farmer.

The duty suggested on meat would enable the farmer to get a better price for his stock. It would help to increase the price of meat ; and eventually that would affect the price of store-stock. At present foreign animals are sent over to this country to the detriment of the English farmer.

G. MARTIN, BUDOCK LODGE, AMBLESIDE AVENUE, STREATHAM, LONDON, S.W. ; Farmer.

This duty would help the home producer of stock, and would not increase the price to the consumer. In this town (Streatham) there are 70,000 inhabitants, and we scarcely get any English meat. All the best butchers buy Deptford-killed beef, also Dutch calves, Dutch pork, and some English mutton and lamb. If the above duty is put on foreign meat the butcher will not be able to purchase at the same price as hitherto, and will be compelled to go to the English market.

1789

P. & C. SEWARD, BOROUGH HOUSE, PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE ; Farmers.

These duties would be a direct benefit to us. According to free traders the tax on oats alone would cost us £75 per annum more, besides the increase on the manufacture of machinery. We honestly believe that under Mr. Chamberlain's scheme the whole country would thrive and benefit. If we are right, then, while the country is thriving, no one out of employment, and trade good, the farmer will have no trouble in selling his produce at remunerative prices.

G. P. SMITHSON, WEST CLANDON, SURREY ; Farmer.

They ought to benefit me slightly by tending to improve the price of milk, at all events they would lessen the chance of getting a large quantity of milk from France in the winter time, which there was so much talk about a few winters ago.

R. STAPLEY, HOREHAM ROAD, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

The duty named would benefit our branches of industry, but here again the advantage would be lost if Colonial produce of the same kind were admitted free.

J. F. GREEN, J.P., GREENMOUNT, PATRICK'S WELL, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

I do not keep a large dairy, only one sufficient for household supply. The duty on meat would benefit me indirectly as enhancing prices for fat cattle, and thereby enabling buyers to give better prices for forward store cattle, in which I am principally interested. It also would encourage better prices for home-grown mutton (although the Colonial trade in that is very large). At all events it would discourage large mutton shipments from other sheep-producing countries. Also an increased price for dairy produce would naturally raise the prices for heifers in calf, which I also keep for sale.

1790

FORM No. 12,243. Farmer.

A duty of 5 % is not unreasonable on imported foreign meat, as it comes into competition with English produce, and must have a tendency to lower the price. As regards Danish butter, there is a good demand for it, as it is always reliable. I regret this is not so with our English farmhouse butter.

H. WEST, WISBECH, CAMBS.

All fat stock are too cheap, according to the price of store cattle. This is caused by so many fat stock being imported, and a duty of 5 % would be of great assistance to the British farmer.

H. FRY, BARNSTON LODGE, DUNMOW, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The amount of duty suggested would mean a small profit to the farmer, instead of a loss, and the amount being so small ought not to be felt by the consumer.

1791

R. H. LAMB, WHEATFIELD, PORTADOWN, ARMAGH ; Grocer, Wholesale and Retail Farm Produce Merchant.

This duty on meat and dairy produce would certainly assist the co-operative creameries and ourselves personally, as we make considerable beef and butter.

JOHN BURKE, CURRAGH CHASE, KILCORNAN, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

Such a duty would be of benefit to the cattle industry, which principally sustains farmers in Ireland. It would be impossible to pay rent but for the cattle industry. There are hundreds of acres around my district all under grass, tillage being very limited. But for artificial manures we could have neither grass nor crops of any value.

A. FINN, LYDD, KENT ; Farmer.

They will undoubtedly benefit in enhancing the price of frozen mutton and other foreign meat, thus raising the price of the lower grades of home produce, such as barren ewes, when sold and fattened. It will also increase breeding.

FORM No. 12,493. Farmer.

It would be beneficial in protecting our own produce, and prevent us from being flooded with foreign, besides adding to the revenue, and so reducing taxation.

1792

J. J. EVANS, CANTREP, BRECON ; Farmer.

The proposed duties on meat and dairy produce would certainly benefit me by increased price of fat stock, owing to imposition of tax on foreign stock.

W. B. BURT, THE GRANGE, WELLINGORE, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

A duty on meat is more helpful to the meat trade than the duty on corn would be to the corn. It should mean nearly 10s. a head on fat bullocks and 1s. 6d. on fat wethers.

JOHN WHALEY, ANNSBOBO', ROBERTSTOWN, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I should think the meat duty would benefit us to a certain extent, as I understand the foreign cattle shippers are working on a very small margin of profit. This 5 % would undoubtedly lessen it, but then there is nothing to prevent our Colonies from increasing their supply.

FORM No. 12,305. Farmer.

A duty on meat would benefit the farmer, but all foreign meat should be sold as such.

R. LAWRENSON, BALLINGATE, CARNEW, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

We have nothing for feeding stock, so the proposed taxes should be of benefit, also to dairy produce.

G. FRANCE-LUSHINGTON-TULLOCH, SHANBOLARD, LETTERFRACK, GALWAY ; Farmer.

The duty on meat is likely to benefit as tending to increase demand for home-fed beef.

R. W. COOPER, DOUGLAS, CORK ; Farmer.

Every beast I sell has had to pay a tax. I pay about £100 a year in taxes and I sell about 200 head of cattle in the year, therefore every beast pays 10s. a head in taxes. So if duty is levied I will benefit to that extent. The taxes on my farm are income tax, poor rate, and tithe rent charge for a church that does not exist. The only subject I can give any information about is, how taxes affect my competing with foreign cattle. At present every article I can produce is taxed, and on articles I cannot produce, such as tea, tobacco, etc., there is a tax.

C. B. STIBY, BRADFORD-PEVERELL, DORCHESTER ; Farmer.

Colonial produce should be free. 5 % duty on foreign imports would not increase the price to the public and would be an advantage to the farmer.

R. MARSLAND, FRONFELEN, TALGAREG, LLANDYSSIL, CARDIGANSHIRE ; Farmer.

Although I do not fatten cattle, yet I breed them, and on an increased demand for home-fed beef, more cattle would be kept on the farm. The tax on dairy produce would benefit me directly. The present restrictions on the importation of store cattle are of great benefit to this district. The tax on produce would more than compensate me for the tax on manufactured articles, if rents remain fixed—or to put it another way—we could afford to pay higher rents and wages and still make the same profit as formerly.

D. SHEPHERD, KELSO, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

The duty might be of benefit, were it compulsory for all fat stock to be slaughtered at the port of embarkation, to prevent foreign meat being sold as British. The latter has paid its proportion of taxation.

J. MARR, UPPER MILLS, TARVES, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would raise the prices here about $2\frac{1}{2}$ %, therefore farmers would benefit to that extent, and farm labourers would be no worse, because many of them have allowances or board in addition to their money wages. The revenue would gain, and agriculturists would share in the benefit.

P. STACK, FERMOY, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

The duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce would be some help to get us a better price. A shipper of old fat cows got but 2d. per lb. for them ; in England they have to compete with the frozen meat.

FORM No. 12,211. Farmer.

This duty should help, but the extent will altogether depend on the supply and demand, whether the foreign importer or the consumer has to pay it.

J. PIMBLEY, KENSINGTON FARM, MAGHULL, NEAR LIVERPOOL, LANC. ; Farmer.

Indirectly the duties may eventually become a benefit to me and others. The more people produce in our own country the more numerous become our customers for vegetables, &c.

G. STREET, MAULDEN, AMPHILL, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

In the interest of rural labourers a duty should be put upon potatoes also, of which they are producers. This point should not be lost sight of. I know that many are not planted as seed is dear, and if it is not a favourable season they will be swamped by the foreigners.

G. H. ACTON, BRIDGEMOUNT, CASTLEBAR, CO. MAYO ; Farmer.

The duties would make the difference between a remunerative industry, in which I would put more capital, and one that I shall get out of whenever there is an opportunity.

P. E. MEREDITH, CLARA HILL, MOUNTMELLOCK, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

With beef at its present price of about 51s. per cwt. there must be something radically wrong, and if things do not soon look up feeders will fare even worse than last year. Any policy which will improve this will confer inestimable benefits on agriculturists and people who, like myself, feed a good many cattle each year.

T. H. VERGETTE, BOBO' FEN, PETERBORO', NOTTS. ; Farmer.

5 % would benefit farmers very much, because foreign goods have lower railway rates and no taxes to pay on their goods. Thus they can undersell the British producer at least 5 %. Foreign meat pays nothing to the cost of the revenue, while every bullock I graze costs me 3s. to 5s. per head. Their meat is carried over our roads and into our market free of cost. All foreign goods should be charged as much duty as we pay in taxes and rates and this should be applied to a reduction of taxation.

PATRICK DOHENY, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

The duty on meat and dairy produce would be very beneficial, and though the ever-increasing amount of Colonial produce would prevent the price of meat and butter from rising to such a price as would be a hardship on the consumer, yet even if there should be a slight increase in price, there is no reason why foreigners should be allowed to flood our markets to the detriment of millions of the inhabitants of the British Isles.

FORM No. 12,345. Bacon Curers.

The duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce should materially benefit us, but foreign bacon and other hog products should be included in the term "meat." Colonial produce should come free.

C. M. BRUCE, FORBES, N.B. ; Farmer.

A slight rise in price should result, but not more than say 60 % of the amount of the average duty levied on total. To a small extent I should thus profit by the rise in the price of meat.

W. H. BARFOOT SAUNT, GT. OXENDON, MARKET HARBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTON ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce would undoubtedly benefit the breeders and feeders of cattle and sheep, because the greater number of live cattle and sheep are imported from foreign countries and not from the Colonies, and the same thing applies to the importation of dead meat. Personally, as a grazier, I should benefit to some small extent from these duties, but they will have but little effect on the price of either cattle or meat.

W. NICHOLSON, WEST PARK, MIDDLETON ; Farmer.

It would benefit us here as it would raise the price of meat a little. It has not been paying us to make beef. I used to fatten only 70 or 80 cattle in the stalls and now I have only 10, the price of stores being too high for the price of beef.

W. C. BROWN, APPLEBY, DONCASTER ; Farmer.

I produce mutton and beef largely. The duty would raise the price of meat a little, and this should benefit a little.

F. W. RENAULT, ACTON, LONDON, W., AND BUCKLEBURY, BERKS. ; Farmer.

The imposition of the duties on meat and dairy produce would probably benefit by increasing the market prices for sheep and pigs.

F. NEAME, MACKNADE, FAVERSHAM, KENT ; Hop Grower and Farmer.

A 5 % duty on foreign meat and dairy produce would probably cause some increase in the supplies from Canada and the Colonies. It would undoubtedly be of some little assistance, and encourage the development of those industries which appear to be the most suitable for this country to undertake in the parts where corn, and more particularly wheat, growing has become unprofitable.

E. G. ARMSTRONG, J.P., F.S.I., B.A., T.C.D., BALLINASLOE, GALWAY ; Land Agent.

A duty on foreign cattle and sheep, alive and dead, would benefit the meat manufacturer in Great Britain and Ireland. Owing to the enormous quantity of low-class frozen meat imported, all home-fed meat suffers. A small duty would stimulate the production of first-class home beef, mutton and pork. First-class fat meat fed at home returns better, is less wasteful, and consequently cheaper to the consumer than so-called cheap foreign. More store cattle would be raised, and all classes having to do with land would benefit.

MAJOR-GEN. H. E. WHITE, J.P., D.L., LOUGH ESKE CASTLE, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on foreign meat and dairy produce should favourably affect those who fatten stock at home. Against this must be considered the vast area being opened out in the Argentine, Uruguay, &c., for meat production, and the improvement in steamers tending to the lowering of freights, which may enable the foreign producers still to land dead meat or beasts for slaughtering at prices at which the home grower cannot compete. The continual rise in wages in this country must also be considered as an element against the home grower. Railway rates in Great Britain are so high as to militate against home produce.

H. D'ESTERRE, J.P., MELTON MOWBRAY ; Farmer.

This would greatly benefit the farmers, who do not now receive a remunerative price for either meat-producing stock or dairy produce. The latter has fallen into the hands of the creamery trade, to the detriment of the calves, which no longer have sufficient skimmed milk to nourish them.

G. COPE, RATHVILLY, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

If the duty increased price of beef in this neighbourhood by 5 % farmers would probably continue to feed beef, which they are about to give up, in consequence of being at a loss by feeding for the last 3 years.

H. MORTON ODLUM, RATHANGAN, KILDARE ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on beef would slightly raise the price of home-fed meat. Owing to the present glutted state of the markets with foreign meat, fattening cattle has ceased to pay. I have ceased to stall feed, and sell all my cattle as stores.

H. YORATH, MAESMAWE, TALYBONT-ON-USK, BRECONSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty would be of some benefit to me, although there is generally a ready sale for meat and dairy produce when sent to market in a proper manner.

W. J. ORR, BENBUBB, TYBONE ; Farmer.

The tax would be a great benefit to the Irish farmer, as he would probably get much better prices for his fat cattle.

1801

**Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce****Beneficial**
—continued.**J. GORING, "IRONBARKS," STAINES ; Farmer and Butcher.**

This is a subject in which I am dually interested, having a large country wholesale butcher's business, and I must say from both points—as a butcher and farmer—I should much like to see a duty put on the dead meat. If my information is correct (and I have every reason to suppose it is), the large American meat companies, such as Swift's, Archer and Dawson, and others, maintain such prices in U.S.A. that they are enabled to pay a good dividend by dumping huge quantities of beef in this country, greatly to the detriment of the producer here.

J. T. CAMERON, STRUAN, ISLE OF SKYE, N.B. ; Farmer.

The 5 % duty on meat would be of considerable advantage to the sheep-farming industry. The U.S.A. and the Argentine Republic send very large quantities of meat to this country, and the 5 % duty would give the home farmers a much required preference, though they would still be subject to the large and increasing competition from the Colonies. Owing to the ease with which wool can be carried from abroad, sheep farmers have suffered more from the competition of foreign and Colonial wools than from competition in foreign meat. South America is a large and rapidly-increasing field of competition in wool, and, although Colonial wools are admitted free, a substantial tax on South American and other foreign wools would help the home sheep farmers very much, and is urgently required to save the Highland sheep farming industry from extinction.

1802

A. MOSELY, WEST LODGE, HADLEY WOOD, MIDDLESEX ; Farmer.

The duties on meat and dairy produce would be of great benefit to the British farmer, though personally this would not greatly affect me.

WILLIAM GAMBLE, D.C., CLAVE, CASTLEDERG, TYRONE ; Farmer.

This proposed small duty on foreign dairy produce might help us a little. However, a good deal will depend on the quantity of Colonial dairy produce put upon our markets. All imported beef should be dead meat, as the importation of live cattle endangers the health of our home stock, and the free importation of Canadian live lean stores would ruin our calf-rearing dairymen in North Ireland.

F. MATHER, FREAGH, CARBURY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The duties would help me greatly, as I keep both sheep and cattle. In the last few years the prices have been up and down so often that it is very hard to get anything like a fair price, except for stores in the spring and a few early markets for fat cattle and lambs.

RHYS EVAN DAVIES, WHITEGATE, CO. CLARE ; Farmer.

The duty proposed on meat would be reasonable. It would increase the value of stock, which are almost a drug in the market at present. Years ago cattle (store) made £4 to £5 a head more than now. A good 18 months old steer only makes £10 at present.

1803

D. H. JAMES, BAILYBEDW, MAESYORUGIAN, R.S.O., CARMARTHENSHIRE ; Farmer.

A duty on meat and dairy produce would benefit Welsh farmers generally to a certain extent, but if we get that at the expense of dearer food, dearer machinery, and dearer labour, it will be a suicidal bargain. In Wales, of late years, our butter produce, being our main staple, suffers more than anything else. Our soil and climate are well adapted to produce butter, and our farmers' wives and daughters turn out the butter themselves, and a good article is generally the result. But they have to fight the big factories of Denmark and other countries, which excel them in the appearance of the article and its uniformity of quality. As to meat, the home produce holds the premier position in the market. What is wanted is a more strict law regulating the margarine trade, also some help from the Government and owners of land, for the formation of butter and cheese factories in districts suitable for each, so as to bring these articles up to date in excellence and worthy of the patronage of all classes.

J. CALDWELL, MEENAHONEY, CASTLEFIN, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

As the raising of cattle and dairy produce is the principal industry here, these taxes would benefit us more than anything else, and would not act against the interest of the labour or anyone in the country.

1804

R. J. HOSKINS, BEARD HILL FARM, SHEPTON MALLET, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

The cattle grazier will reap a small advantage from the proposed tax, as the foreigner will pay, I should say, about 30s. per bullock ; you may average the carcasses at 6 cwt. each. The cheese maker will reap very little advantage, as the greater part of imported cheese is Colonial (the foreign being Continental fancy cheese and eaten by the aristocracy, as a rule), the duty on those goods will not affect us much. When it comes to butter it will certainly make a difference. I know very little about butter ; the quantity made in Somerset is very small. I come in contact with a lot of agriculturists, but where they are cheese makers, as this is the Cheddar district, we can see it will do very little good, if any.

EDWARD BELL, ROSENALLIS, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

The duty should be a benefit unless the Colonials are able to flood the markets to the same extent as they are being flooded at present. I would rather have it done by them than by foreigners.

J. G. BATEMAN, CAMP, KERRY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would be of extreme advantage, as it would serve to raise the price of home produce, which is now at a low ebb. Of course, we have little to fear from the Colonies, first from their position, and again from their seasons being the converse of ours. I am an adopted native of them and consequently know a good deal about their trade.

GEORGE HYNDMAN, ST. JOHNSTON, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

The proposed tax will benefit us greatly, if store cattle from Canada were allowed into Scotland and England free.

R. G. ADAMSON, J.P., ATHBOY, CO. MEATH ; Farmer.

The duty on meat would affect me very much. At present we are selling beef at 4½d., which benefits no one but the butcher, and him not very much. I go over to the English markets very often, and have been informed on very good authority that the butchers buy good beef as low as 4d. They will sell it to the consumers at 8d. Sooner than lower their price they will let the meat go bad. There is a regular ring of them. Therefore, the present low price of beef benefits no one, and a duty on foreign meat would benefit the farmers very much, and would not raise the price of meat. There is not sufficient margin between the store beast and the fat. If there were a paying price for beef it would make more demand for corn and meat and all feeding stuffs.

J. KNIGHT, HARTING, PETERSFIELD, HANTS ; Farmer.

The 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would help us a little. There should be a duty on imported hops—10s. to 20s. per cwt.—otherwise the hop growers will soon be eliminated.

B. B. SAMPWELL, SANKENOE, AYLSHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

No doubt the duty of 5 % on foreign meat and dairy produce would help British farmers, but arable farmers would be far more benefited by admitting the notoriously healthy Canadian stores free, but then you would have the grass farmers and Irishmen against you.

A. REEVES, REEVE MOUNT, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The duty on dairy produce would be a benefit, but the dairy industry in Ireland is quite neglected, and seeing the large part Northern Europe plays in supplying butter, cheese and bacon, this duty would be a help. Ireland is so specially suited for this industry.

S. J. LEESON, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

Anything that will help to check the downward tendency of fat stock and butter will benefit us. Profits at present are very near vanishing point.

G. ADLAM, EAST HERRINGTON, WELLS, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

My produce is subject to duty in the shape of local rates and a 5 % duty on foreign produce would tend to lower my rates, which would be a great benefit.

J. WILLIS, NUFFIELD, HENLEY-ON-THAMES, OXON ; Farmer.

Yes. In addition to the duty, it is more important that all foreign produce should be sold as such, and not as home produce.

J. S. JOHNSTON, CRAILING HALL, JEDBURGH ; Farmer.

5 % on meat and dairy produce would benefit agriculture to the extent of the rise in the price of the said articles, which would be very small, as a considerable share of the 5 % (if not the whole) will be paid by the foreigner.

T. F. HANCOCK, BROOM HALL, SUNNINGDALE, ASCOT ; Farmer.

On such a farm as this the duty on dairy produce may possibly tend to a better price for milk.

FORM No. 12,900. Farmer.

I do not give much attention to dairy produce, but the tariff should benefit those who are more concerned in it. The tariff on meat should be a benefit to stock breeders, whose chief business is feeding cattle for Dublin and English markets.

E. G. OSBORNE, ALTMOVER, DUNGIVEN, LONDONDEERRY ; Farmer.

In former years all farm produce was beef and mutton, giving a splendid return, but of late I found it impossible to compete against foreign imports ; in consequence I have given it up, and keep only store cattle for English and Scotch markets. If the duty suggested could be put on meat it would be an inducement to try and produce it again. At present there is none, over and above being able to compete in the English and Scotch markets against importation. I would have a much better return in farm produce from the fact that I would be compelled to use oil and cotton cake largely, as in former years, which would make the farmyard manure much more valuable. About 100 to 200 head of cattle and the same quantity of sheep were turned out every year fit for the butchers' stalls ; now there are very few.

FORM No. 12,062. Farmer.

A 5 % duty on foreign meat would be a slight help to the English meat producer, but what would help him or me more, would be that all foreign meat should be sold as such, and a great deal of it not passed off as prime English. A great deal of foreign meat bought at a low price is sold as English at the market price of best English. Something should be done to prevent this.

T. CASSWELL, POINTON HOUSE, FOLKINGHAM, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

If 5 % duty were put upon meat, English butchers would be better able to compete with the foreign now sold, and assist them to quit their coarser parts of meat at the same price as the foreign. The price of foreign meat being lower, the working classes buy it, instead of the inferior cuts of English. Hence, if the English butcher got this advantage, he would at once become a better customer in the fat stock markets, and

1809 **Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

Beneficial
—continued.

help the English feeder. But even did not this occur, the duty would help the revenue, and enable the Government to reduce taxation. This is a far safer calculation than placing any reliance upon the duty to help the farmer, as it would not raise the price of meat in England at all ; supply and demand always settle price.

W. FENNELL, RATHSIDE, BALLYTORE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

Any duty on foreign meat, however small, would be of use. I am a large raiser of both cattle and sheep, and used to fatten all off. Now I find selling them as stores pays better, as the cost of producing the best finished has in no way diminished, and when put on the market they have to compete not alone with the frozen and chilled meat, but against cattle slaughtered in Liverpool and elsewhere, and sold as home killed, or, and it is only a step further, home grown. All this meat is carried, either alive or dead, cheaper and better than we can get it carried in our own country, and by our own carrying companies. Foreign competition and dumping of foreign cattle, even in the past winter, has meant the loss of thousands and thousands of pounds to Irish producers.

JOHN CROCKETT, DRUMNASHIRE, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

If the duty suggested would steady imports, it would be useful, but if store cattle are admitted we will be ruined ; that would be the last straw.

1810 **R. N. RUSSELL, 8, BALLINACURRA TERRACE, LIMERICK ; Farmer.**

The 5 % suggested duty would be of the greatest benefit to all of the dairy farmers and stock raisers of this country. The price we get for our store cattle depends on the English demand, and a moderate duty should encourage English feeders to return to stall feeding cattle, and to growing roots again. Sometimes our store cattle in autumn are unsaleable, or almost so.

C. ROBERTSON, HALLHILL-BY-BERRIE, KINCARDINE, N.B. ; Farmer.

The above duty would be of more advantage than the duty on grain, but if foreign cattle were admitted alive it would benefit us as much. It would necessarily raise the price to the consumer, and I doubt if, on the whole, it would make farming more prosperous.

J. M. HARRIS, CHILVESTER LODGE, CALNE, WILTS. ; Bacon Curer.

If any meat is taxed, all meat imported should be included—bacon, hams, &c. Bacon is not a poor man's food. Enormous quantities come from foreign countries, and England is the only market for it. A tax of 5 % would not keep back a lb. or increase the price 1d. Competition with Colonial bacon would prevent advance in prices. A 5 % duty would somewhat encourage home producers, but more especially the Canadians, by whom unlimited supplies could be sent to this country if found profitable.

1811 **R. A. GILFILLAN, THE CROSS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.**

I grow roots and other crops for fattening stock. Mr. Chamberlain's proposal to put a toll of £1 per head on a foreign ox valued £20, would stimulate the demand for Irish cattle, in Glasgow or Manchester. It is a thing sorely needed at the present time, as the raising of stock has been unprofitable latterly, and that mainly by reason of the enormous free imports into the centres of consumption.

FORM No. 12,606. Farmer.

5 % on meat and dairy produce would help the farming community greatly. Fat cattle are often sold at a very bad price, and it seems to make very little difference in the retail price of meat, whether they are cheap or dear. I am quite satisfied with the price I get for butter, but this is owing to being near a town, and sending it in daily with the butter-milk. There are a great many farmers all over the country who sell good butter at a price which cannot pay.

ALFRED PARTON, LEA HALL, NANTWICH ; Farmer.

The duty would certainly have a tendency to raise the price of meat. That it would benefit the English farmer as a meat producer is a foregone conclusion. With regard to dairy produce, a duty would not help us much as Colonial produce is admitted free, for most of our dairy produce is sent from our Colonies. I am aware a considerable lot of Continental butter is sent.

1812 **DENIS G. B. BINGHAM, BELMULLET, Co. MAYO ; Farmer.**

Give us a better chance to the extent of about 2½ % in price of home-grown cattle. American and Argentine meat gives us no chance to make a profit on what we try to grow.

R. DUNNE, KILMOGANNY, Co. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

If the duty means a rise in dairy produce, with a corresponding increase in the price of store cattle, it would be a decided increase to my income. But if Colonial dairy produce, meat, and cattle were to be free, it would not mean much increase to my income, having to pay the extra price for flour. Therefore I do not consider it would benefit me much.

T. B. NEWITT, CRANFORD, KETTERING, NORTHAMPTON ; Land and Estate Agent and Farmer.

The duty would certainly be a help to the British farmer, but Colonial produce is the most likely to be our greatest competitor in the future. It will not make any difference to the British farmer whether the meat comes from a Colony or foreign country, if it keeps the price below a remunerative figure. We must then help ourselves as much as possible by co-operation and self-reliance.

1813

T. C. SMITH, ADMASTON, RUGELEY, STAFFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

The effect of such duties might be felt in an advance of prices in British meat and milk, but the expenses of production would be necessarily increased by import duties on corn. With me, as with many other dairy farmers and feeders of live stock, the cheapness of imported food stuffs acts as the most potent stimulus of production.

S. W. FOX, HUMBERSTONE, LEICESTERSHIRE ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % on an industry on which there is already a certain amount of profit must benefit that industry to that amount.

G. HUMPHREYS, BROGBORO PARK, ASPLEY GUISE, BEDS. ; Farmer.

A duty on meat and dairy produce would benefit me to the rate, at least, of the 5 % suggested, and this is only fair, as I don't see why the foreigner should have the advantage of our markets and pay no rates or taxes when our own land is heavily burdened.

E. GREEN, THE MOORS, WELSHPOOL, MONTGOMERY ; Farmer.

It can only benefit the British farmer by the tolls being given to him, and surely if he has to cater for the consuming public at less than he can produce the article through foreign competition, he has a just claim to it, particularly so long as the consumer does not suffer.

1814

A. J. MCINTOSH, BORELAND, CANLAVEROCK, DUMFRIES ; Farmer.

The duty would not be felt directly, but would be an indirect benefit in causing the foreigner to pay for the use of the British market, which the home producer has to do in the shape of local taxation.

G. RONALDSON, STONEBROOK LODGE, BALLYMORE EUSTACE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

As I sell milk new, a tax on dairy produce would not benefit me as much as if I were making butter.

H. W. SITWELL, BROADWELL HOUSE, STOCKTON, RUGBY, WARWICKSHIRE ; Farmer.

These duties would slightly benefit the British farmer, but are more to be commended for the benefit they would confer on the Colonies, and for that reason I am strongly in favour of them.

FORM No. 12,168. Farmer.

Increased working expenses and the difficulty of getting the work done is killing the dairy industry round here, except in thickly populated centres. A 5 % duty on meat would certainly relieve a farmer by providing a certain amount of taxes that might otherwise have to be paid by him, but I don't think he would get an increase in value for his cattle.

1815

W. HUTCHINSON, PENRITH ; Farmer.

If it raised the price it would benefit me to that extent, but the same quantity would come as before. It is a well accepted fact, that our market is ruled by the arrivals at Birkenhead. Every large farmer watches the reports of the foreign arrivals and holds or sells his stock accordingly. Not one beast or sheep less would be sent if 5 % duty was imposed, and the demand would regulate the selling price, not the 5 % duty.

A. PULLING, BEDDINGTON, NEAR CROYDON ; Farmer.

If the duty on meat improves the price of butchers' beasts here which now have to compete directly with cattle slaughtered at Deptford, &c., it would give home feeders more chance of some profit for feeding. The impoverishment of the land and its insufficient cultivation for want of means to pay for labour and implements, cause a large annual loss to the rates. There is a large national capital in the shape of agricultural land which owing to the above causes, is producing very small interest compared with what it might if properly cultivated and manured ; not only this, but it takes a large outlay to bring badly cultivated land back into good condition ; it is therefore capital not only lying comparatively idle, but also becoming depreciable.

B. E. NICHOLLS, BILLINGHURST, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

If a 5 % duty would have the effect of raising the market price here it would benefit me to that extent (5 %). I am in favour of a substantial Colonial preference on Imperial grounds, having farmed for 10 years in Australia.

1816

J. CLARKE, STRABANE, CO. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

Until Colonial produce takes the place of foreign produce, any duty would help the growth of beef and mutton. At present the margin between the prices of stores and beef is unprofitable, and the principal benefit derived is the better manure from the cake, &c., used.

W. D. WEBBER, MITCHELSTOWN CASTLE, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

The suggested duty would on the whole be advantageous to the branches of industry I am engaged in. But, owing to greater fluctuations of price, this advantage might often not be operative. The duty on meat, advantageous to the process of fattening, would not affect the process of rearing store stock. The admission of live stock—free or subject to duty—would be very injurious to the process of rearing. In the case of the small Irish farmer generally, this might prove disastrous. In my own case it would oblige me to give up breeding and rearing, and turn my attention to fattening. This would not be possible for the small farmer. The duty on dairy produce would be advantageous to the small farmer, and would not affect the class of dairying industry practised by me. None of the queries make mention of the 10 % duty suggested by Mr. Chamberlain on imported manufactured articles. This duty would counteract for farmers the benefit they might derive from

1817 **Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

Beneficial
—continued.

duties on agricultural produce. Those having a direct interest in the advantages of a tariff are of 2 classes :— No. 1. Those who produce food stuffs—farmers, &c. 2. Those who produce manufactures—artizans, &c. The fiscal interests of these are opposed. Mr. Chamberlain suggests an equivalent advantage for each. If the decision about the tariff rested with these classes alone such a compromise might be brought about. But in the decision a much larger class will be consulted—the consumer,—whose interests lie in having no tariff, particularly on food stuffs. (The home consumption of No. 1—produce—is vastly in excess of the home consumption of No. 2.) It seems apparent that all classes will vote for their own interests, so the great preponderance of consumers will be against No. 1. This was the means by which Free Trade was introduced, and the producers of food stuffs have since remained out in the cold. The same conflicting interests exist to-day.

REV. J. CARDWELL GARDNER, FLUKE HALL, NEAR GARSTANG, LANCs. ; Farmer.

I approve of the proposed duties on meat and dairy produce. The results would be better home price, less competition with near foreigners, and benefit to Colonials.

A. B. HOLT, BROUGHTON GRANGE, NEAR BRIGG, LINCs. ; Farmer.

The duties proposed would increase the price of beef and may possibly increase the price of production unless food stuffs can be bought at a cheap rate. Raw wool is hard to sell and has been for the last 6 years, prices are low and will remain so if it be allowed to come in from abroad.

1818

E. VINSON, HIGHCEST HALL, SWANLEY, KENT ; Farmer.

I keep about 500 sheep and 50 or 60 bullocks, so that 5 % on imported meat will benefit me a little. But every butcher that sells any foreign meat should have to take out a licence, and have written over his shop in large letters " Licensed to deal in foreign meat." We should then get 2 classes of butchers. One who deals in English could not afford to have those words over his shop, and it would protect the public. Now, lots of foreign is sold as English, with large profits.

A. WEIR, F.A.L., STRABANE, DONEGAL ; Auctioneer, Seed and Guano Merchant.

The suggested tax would be a benefit so long as Colonial produce did not supply the whole, or more than the whole, of our requirements.

A. O. T. BENNETT, GATELY HALL, EL. DEREHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

A duty on meat would benefit the graziers and breeders to a certain degree, but no class of necessary food ought to be taxed so as to make the price of living dearer in this country. A registration duty (as the 2s. duty on corn) of so much per cwt. (or per cent.) would do no harm if it were not excessive. The best way to help the British farmer and to protect the consumer would be to make it compulsory for butchers to sell imported meat as such. There could then be no outcry about raising the price of food for the poor man. The ideal would be that only home grown or imported meat could be sold at one shop. All imported meat ought to be legibly branded, and if butchers sell home grown and imported meat at the same shop, then they should be compelled to put a notice in their windows to this effect. In the " Journal of the Board of Agriculture " for April, I note, that, in Birmingham, American chilled hind-quarters realise more per cwt. than prime English beef, but I expect in the majority of cases, this chilled beef is sold as prime English. As long as British farmers have to face such unfair competition, so long will farming be in its present depressed state. Make it compulsory for railway companies to charge foreign produce, sold as such, equally with English, and protect the consumer from fraud, and we shall not hear so much about agricultural depression.

1819

G. SMYTH, QUICKSWOOD, BALDOCK, HEETFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

This proposal would be a benefit to me as I often fatten sheep and lambs for the London market to the extent of about £2,000 worth annually. I have to compete against the enormous amount from foreign countries which is often sold as English, and more so in the case of beef. This season trade has been very bad, the supplies from South America and the States have ruled the markets and I have fatted 30 bullocks at a loss. Bullocks that cost me £13 10s. last June are only making £18 10s. at market after nearly a year's keep. The price of stores is out of all proportion to fat ones, many good beasts this season have realised less than 6d. per lb. Have the general public benefited ?

1820

F. W. P. MATTHEWS, SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD, OXON. ; Farmer.

The amount paid extra by the consumer is all I shall get extra. The Colonial produce coming free would soon make the foreign producer pay the whole.

FORM No. 12,714. Farmer.

In the face of large imports of beef, mutton and butter, coming in free from our Colonies the proposed 5 % duty would not be a material benefit to the home producer, but still of some advantage. It would not in any way affect the retail price of beef and mutton to the consumer ; the effect on butter if apparent would be very small.

A. MISKIN, CHART SUTTON, KENT ; Farmer.

I should benefit to the extent of any rise in price caused by the import duty.

CAPT. H. E. WALTERS, R.N., CAER-LLAN, MONMOUTH ; Farmer.

The tendency will be to stimulate production both at home and in the Colonies. A considerable development of the dairy industry at home may be looked for. The dairy produce, being more profitable than meat production on the farm, should certainly increase under proposed tariff, but whether price will rise and be remunerative, depends on the demand and the general prosperity of the country.

1821

T. S. MOYLES, BALLYCOLLAN, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

5 % as proposed, would benefit the producer of meat to a very small extent. It is probable that the dealers and middlemen would get most of it.

WM. DEADY, JERPOINT, THOMASTOWN, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

The proposed tax would enable me to meet my engagements easier by getting a better price.

B. COLE, THE HYDE MILLS, LUTON, BEDFORD ; Farmer.

5 % should be charged on both live and dead meat.

JAMES CLARKE, LISDIVIN, STRABANE, CO. TYRONE ; Farmer.

These duties would benefit me more than the proposed duty on grain, as I make a good deal of butter. The present price is much below what it was 20 or 30 years ago, owing to foreign butter being admitted free into our markets. Beef has been paying so badly that I gave up producing it 10 years ago, but a 5 % duty would enable me to begin again with the hope of making it pay.

F. GITTUS, WEST ROW, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

More care should be taken than at present to see that the meat is sold for what it really is, more especially in the case of foreign imports. I consider this would benefit us more.

1822

J. RICHARDS, WOLVERTON, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat would raise the cost price of the foreigner by that amount and would therefore put us into a better position to compete. From a farmer's point of view there should be no preference to the Colonies.

ALDERMAN J. T. HARRISON, J.P., THE POPLARS, BUCKINGHAM ; Farmer.

The duty would benefit me only to the extent that it may assist in the prevention of foreign meat being sold as home-bred—and frozen milk as well.

J. PUREFOY POE, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

If the duty increases the price of beef, which I doubt, it will naturally cause a better demand for store cattle.

A. E. PAYNE, WALFORD MANOR, BASCHURCH, SHREWSBURY ; Farmer.

The proposed duties of 5 % on meat and dairy produce might benefit me if the prices of these articles were raised to that extent. This seems very doubtful, owing to the increased supplies which may be expected from our Colonies. If a rise in prices were brought about in these articles, to my benefit, it would only be some small set-off against the unjust burdens, rates and taxes, specially laid upon my raw material, viz., the land from which I produce.

1823

S. KIDNER, BICKLEY, MILVERTON, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

The duty would have some effect on prices, and thus be a direct benefit, but not to the extent of the duty.

FORM No. 12,737. Farmer.

The duty on meat will enable me to put more cattle through my hands, as I can only compete successfully with my very primest finished cattle, and the 5 % will cover railway carriage to English markets.

R. C. GOODEN-CHISHOLM, WHIN CROFT, FERNDOWN, WIMBORNE, DORSET.

The duty would be paid by the producer ; almost certain to be, with such a small duty. I have land in 2 parishes ; in one (a) say rates are 4s. in the £, in the other (b) 6s., and in the one which bears the higher rate there is also a tithe and land tax. I send a score of sheep from (a) and a score from (b) to the market, but I cannot get the 1s. a head extra on the lot from (b), and I should be smiled at if I asked it on the grounds that I had to pay a heavier tax on that lot.

T. F. LEVINGE, KILLUCAN, WESTMEATH ; Farmer.

I do not know the capabilities of the Colonies to fill the gap. I expect the consumer would be at no loss, at least after a couple of years. Personally I would be a gainer, and so would all the community employed as I am, if even the value of grazing land, at least in Ireland, should greatly increase. The question for the agitator though, is, how far the agricultural advancement would militate against the interest of remainder of the population in towns generally.

1824

H. T. BENSTED, TEYNHAM COURT, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT ; Farmer.

I might receive a slight benefit by a duty on foreign beef, but most of the frozen mutton comes from the Colonies, and would still come here free.

H. S. WARREN SMITH, WALEY HOUSE, BLETCHINGLEY, SURREY ; Farmer.

Under the proposed tariff I should feel more sure as to what the finished article would return me, and so it would encourage its production.

J. RILEY, PUTLEY COURT, LEDBURY, HEREFORD ; Farmer.

It would certainly benefit me at first, but might, and probably would, stimulate Colonial produce till the advantage would be lost ; but if the advantage was lost to me, I might still gain by the increased prosperity

1825 **Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

Beneficial
—continued.

of the country, and a greater demand for fruit—the people having to spend less on meat, &c., could afford to spend more on fruit.

W. MARRIAGE, DILBRIDGE HALL, COLCHESTER, ESSEX ; Farmer.

This proposal would probably be a help to grass farmers, and being so small a duty would not perceptibly raise price.

T. WESTLAND GREENE, MILLBROOK, MAGENEX, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would benefit me just so far as it goes and not a whit further. It would encourage me to the extent that I would feel that either the foreigner or the consumer was paying a small share of the taxation for the maintenance of our markets, and all of which the home producer now pays. It is the lack of store cattle at prices co-ordinated to the world-value of beef, which has put tens of thousands of acres out of tillage in England and Ireland. It may be expedient to prohibit importation of store cattle, but it comes to this : in this country of free imports all round, the main industry of the country—agriculture—is absolutely prohibited from importing, either freely or otherwise, that which is essential to carrying on that industry under present-day conditions, namely, store cattle.

W. A. HAMILTON, J.P., HIGH SHERIFF OF CO. DONEGAL, BRIDGETOWN, CO. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

The probable effect of the proposed taxes would be that landlords at end of 15 years' judicial tenancies (when rents would be revised) would be entitled to a slight increase of rents. But all land will probably be sold to the tenants, who are likely to be, say $2\frac{1}{2}$ % better off than at present, assuming the Colonies can only supply half the amount required by Great Britain.

D. COOK, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Yeoman.

It is only fair that a duty on imported meat and dairy produce should be paid by the foreigner. We make butter, but our shopkeepers no longer buy it, as they say they can get more out of foreign. What butter we make is hawked from door to door ; it is splendid butter, but people will buy the foreign because it is cheaper. Meat which is foreign should be sold as such ; foreign meat is often sold as English, which is not fair to home producers. A duty on foreign dairy produce and meat is not only beneficial to the farmers but to the nation at large. Whatever brings in revenue helps the taxpayer. As we are going on at present, the nation is spending more than it earns, and the time must come when our chief national industries will have to be protected, if not, we may be the laughing-stock of the world. Because, even without war, Britain can be starved into submission by the foreigner simply forbidding the export of grain.

J. MILLS WHITE, CIRENCESTER, GLOS. ; Farmer.

The duty would keep the price more regular, and help to prevent its getting unduly depressed at times when several large cargoes come in together, and must be sold at any price, thereby causing a slump.

C. E. BARRITT, MALDON, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The duty might make the price of beef better, which would be very desirable. Beef cannot be fatted to a profit under $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. on the carcase. The consumer gets no benefit from the extreme cheapness of meat, as he is charged just the same for his joints.

ROBERT LONG, UPPER STONDON, SHEFFORD S.O., BEDS. ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty would benefit us in both instances, especially if when levying these duties, foreign produce was marked as such. Having acted (and my father before me) as overseer, during the past 70 years, in the small parish in which I farm, I have rate books which show the increased charges on land during that period ; and which are a heavy tax on the producer of this country.

MICHAEL McCANN, LISMOY HOUSE, NEWTOWNFORBES, CO. LONGFORD ; Farmer.

Foreign cattle coming to the English markets, alive or dead, lower the price of home produce, and leave the farmer little or no profit, when his expenses are taken into consideration. The high freight is against us also ; it being almost as expensive to get our cattle to market as it is for the American to send his to Birkenhead. I certainly agree with the 5 % duty on the foreign commodity, as it is most unfair to us, who pay such heavy taxes, to leave the foreigner free to compete with us on our own ground.

P. BLUNDELL, REAM HILLS, WEETON, KIRKHAM, LANCs. ; Farmer.

So far as the cattle and sheep are concerned, which we breed and rear on the farm, prices would be improved by 5 % or more. The price of milk and dairy produce would I expect improve in a corresponding degree.

MAJOR R. H. B. GALBRAITH, J.P., LOUGHREA, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

All Ireland should vote for the 5 % on imported meat and dairy produce ; it would doubtless increase the price of home-grown cattle and encourage the raising of them in greater numbers, and better quality. It would be equally beneficial in the dairy line, as far as Ireland is concerned, and it would especially benefit the Irish tenant farmer, he being the rearer of young cattle.

J. P. MALCOM, EDINBEG, ROTHESAY, BUTE ; Farmer.

Disposing of most of my milk new, I think these duties would be of little benefit to me directly. However, I favour something in this direction being done, as such duties would help agriculture as a whole, and those situated as I am might benefit indirectly.

1826

1827

1828

1829

J. KYDD, CARNOUSTIE, FORFAR ; Farmer.

The benefit would be something, but nothing compared to what the free importation of Canadian lean cattle would be, or the turning of the oversea live trade into wholly dead meat.

ELIZABETH COONEY, KILLADUFF, AUGHIRM ; Farmer.

The suggested duty on meat and dairy produce would give a direct filip to the feeding of cattle for the market. As things are, stall feeding does not pay at all, and if some means could be devised to keep off part of the keen competition of foreign importers, the agricultural industry in Ireland would have a chance of supplying our own markets and the English as well, with a superior quality of meat, and the opportunity of having the consequent manurial benefits for the sustenance and improvement of the land.

THOS. W. WEBBER, KELLYVILLE, ATHY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % on foreign imported meat and dairy produce must benefit Ireland very largely, without at the same time raising the price of meat to the consumer more than a trifle. The Colonial imports will still compete, and practically the high price of meat in London and the great cities will be kept up by the middlemen, whose profit is out of proportion to that of the farmer. At present, many farmers have laid down their farms, and dismissed the labourers, who used to find ample employment tilling the land. They had to do it to avoid bankruptcy: now they are relying on grazing and rearing cattle on the untilled land as the only paying method of farming. But the once wealthy grazier who had no expense but a herd and his dog is now feeling the pinch of adversity, and when he gets his fine-fed bullocks to market, he finds in front of him enormous shiploads of American and Argentine cattle. He has to pay rent for his land, besides ever-increasing taxes to the Imperial Government, poor rates, and road rates. He is undersold by the foreigner who pays no tax at all to support this country. The protection of home industries and the reversal of the suicidal policy called erroneously Free Trade must—and largely—benefit all agriculturists in Ireland and in every other country.

1830

J. S. ROGERS, DUNKINEELY, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I quite agree with all Mr. Chamberlain's proposals in relation to fiscal reform and have been an advocate of fair trade, on platforms, for the past 25 years. I am now 69 years of age, and for many years past have observed one trade after another being stolen from us by the foreigner and the population diminishing all the time, for want of profitable employment. The proposed fiscal reform will affect me in this respect. My lands are all in pasture, and I would be able to sell to better advantage about 60 head of fat cattle annually, which should realise an increased profit of from 20s. to 30s. per head.

J. O'REGAN, MIDDLETON, CORK ; Farmer.

Being largely interested in store cattle, this change would benefit me in keeping the prices steady. One of the great drawbacks to our trade at present is the fluctuation in prices.

1831

B. STIMPSON, PARK FARM, BIXLEY, NORWICH, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

The 5 % would be paid by the sender. It would make no difference to its market value here, and little or no difference to the value of the meat we produce.

H. C. VILLIERS-STUART, CAPPOQUIN, WATERFORD ; Farmer.

The steadying effect of this tax would be most valuable and would increase the number of cows kept in this country. To my mind, this would have even more effect in this part of the country, than a tax on corn. The knowledge that the area of competition was circumscribed would encourage many more to go in for dairying, who now go in for dry stock only, and would thus increase tillage. The tax on meat would certainly be an encouragement to fatten cattle more freely as one would feel surer of a steadier price.

L. C. WREIGLEY, TULBECK GRANGE, CHEPSTOW, MONMOUTHSHIRE ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would largely balance the price of English meat and would help the situation very greatly.

EDWARD CABTY, BURTOWN, ATHY, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The proposed tax would help the whole community, and I would feel satisfied as regards help to our Colonies, and the Empire at large.

1832

W. S. WAITHAM, MERLIN PARK, GALWAY ; Farmer.

In raising price of cattle and making a profit more certain. At present, no profit has been made on cattle purchased in May last (owing to the flooding of the market with vast quantities of frozen meat). This means the loss of a year's grass, and taxing foreign meat would make the demand for cattle of a more steady character. In this country farming is now a wild speculation.

A. ALLEN, CARRICKBOY, EDGEWORTHSTOWN, CO. LONGFORD ; Farmer.

The proposed duties would benefit me in various ways. Fluctuation in price of stock is what is ruining farmers. A large supply of foreign meat causes a depression in sale of cattle. Two months later, a small supply of foreign meat will have the opposite effect. A scarcity of foreign stock in spring causes the farmer to pay more for cattle he has to buy, and then a large supply of foreign in harvest causes a glut, and makes him sell with very small profits or none at all. The proposed tax I believe would tend to put an end to this up and down in the price of cattle.

HASLER & CLAPHAM, DUNMOW, ESSEX ; Farmers.

The suggested duties appear likely to be beneficial, especially if there were no duty on imported corn. Anything that tends to cheapen the cost of manufactured products (including meat, dairy produce, &c.), must help the employment of labour here, and a small duty on the manufactured article would be preferable to a duty on the raw material.

B. SIMONS, THE GRANGE, WILLOUGHBY, ALFORD, Lincs. ; Farmer, Grazier and Auctioneer.

This suggestion will not very materially help the farmer, but I entirely agree with the principle. I am an Imperialist, and believe the British Empire, confederated upon a sound preferential fiscal basis, can be as self-contained and independent as the U.S.A., or any other part of the world.

R. STRATTON, THE DUFFRYN, NEWPORT, MON. ; Farmer.

The tendency would be to raise prices somewhat, and to that extent it would benefit me as a producer. But prices depend on supply, and if Colonials gained an advantage, as they would do under the proposed arrangement, their supplies would be increased, and I doubt if prices would be appreciably raised.

HENRY SMYTH, WHITEGATE, Co. CORK ; Farmer.

The duty on meat would give us a better price for fat cattle and sheep. The quantities of meat sent from the Colonies will be so enormous that it will keep down the price in the home markets.

J. C. MCKAY, PALLAS HOUSE, BEAUFORT, KERRY ; Farmer.

Any duty on meat and dairy produce will benefit me. At present I have to compete in the meat line with men who pay practically no rent for their land (I mean in foreign countries), and who can place their produce on the English markets at cheaper rates of transit than I can from this country. Small as the duty of 5 % is, it would be better than nothing, as it would enable me to continue farming in this country, and, unless something in the shape of duty is put on, I shall be compelled to try for a living in some other country. It is on young stock I am depending, and, if young stores are admitted free to England, for me it simply spells ruin. The same applies to dairy produce ; the price we are getting at present for butter would leave no profit whatever, especially to those who have to employ labour.

FORM No. 2,223. Margarine Manufacturers.

Margarine is not exported from Great Britain to any European country or the U.S.A. On the contrary, those countries export to England. In Holland several margarine factories practically only work for, and subsist upon, the British market. A duty of 10 % on all imported margarine would enable British factories to compete on fairly equal terms with their foreign rivals. Any duty on raw materials would not only defeat the object of that on the finished article, but place British manufacturers in a worse position than before.

COUNTY CAVAN STORES, LTD. (T. PADOCK), CAVAN ; Manufacturers, &c.

An import duty of 10s. per cwt. on bacon and 15 % on machinery would benefit manufacturers in this country.

CAPT. E. G. PRETYMAN, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

The duty would be a help, but the general tariff reform programme aims mainly at extending and benefiting the manufacturing industry in the towns, *i.e.*, in increasing the demand for town labour. Unless the farmer is given a sufficient advantage to enable him to compete in the labour market this difficulty will thus be increased. A Colonial preference means selling manufactured goods to these Colonies and buying agricultural produce from them, *i.e.*, benefiting the home manufacturer at the expense of increased competition for the farmer. Farmers have suffered more through free imports than any other producers, because their products are so easily transported ; but they have now to submit to a system which is universal throughout the community. I strongly favour the principle of tariff reform, because I clearly foresee that the fate which has befallen agriculturists is, from exactly similar causes, impending over our industrial interests. But I feel strongly that if a tariff is framed it should not put agriculturists in a worse position than that they now occupy. I do not consider that these proposals are adequate.

D. MACKINTOSH, DUNAMAISE, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S Co. ; Farmer.

I fatten about 700 sheep and lambs each year and sell them on Dublin market principally to English buyers. It is often very hard to make sheep fattening pay, and cattle fattening is even worse. The proposed duty on foreign meat may give some encouragement to men working in a business that can scarcely be carried on under present conditions. But nothing would benefit the small farmers of Ireland, and Ireland generally, so much as a heavy duty on foreign bacon. Ireland fattens a large number of pigs, and could fatten double as many more, but at present the farmers are selling their own fat pigs to shippers and a few large curers at about 3½d. per lb., while they buy American bacon for their own use at 7d. per lb. By a duty on foreign bacon a great stimulus would be given to pig fattening and bacon curing in Ireland, and there would be a small bacon-curing establishment in almost every town and village in the country. It must be something enormous the amount of money annually drained out of this country and paid to America for bacon, out of the very pockets of the small farmers who produce a better article themselves. A duty on foreign bacon would keep this large amount of money at home, and be of untold benefit, while injuring no one.

A. & R. OSBORNE, 97, HUTCHESON STREET, GLASGOW ; Provision Merchants.

We have a strong opinion that a 10 % tariff on margarine would force the manufacture of that article in this country to a very much larger extent than at present, instead of Holland, &c., and also the same would happen to butter, to a considerable extent, and we might say that principle, we think, could be extended to many articles we know of, without being a hardship on any person in this country, but of great benefit to many people.

HUGH FRASEE, DANESCROFT, LISBURN, CO. DOWN ; Farmer.

I believe a very small duty on meat and dairy produce would be most beneficial just at present, but a vast improvement has been made in the quality of foreign produce. We are not afraid of competition if the Government would properly supervise the markets and see that foreign produce is not sold for British ; this is our great difficulty. The British Government takes no interest whatever in the British farmer, and will likely waken up when it is too late. A very small duty would be useful in assisting us to hold our own.

G. RABY, FYFIELD HALL, ONGAR, ESSEX ; Farmer.

A change has come over the milk industry, and there are signs that it is being overdone. Probably, if duties such as those suggested are placed on dairy produce it would lead to a larger output of butter, &c.

14 farmers state generally that the duty would be beneficial in their case if it led to reduced rates and taxes. Other replies are as follows :—

**Beneficial if Taxes
reduced**

H. J. SHERRIFF, HATFIELD, HERTS. ; Farmer.

The benefit would be most small, except in reducing rates in other ways, and would positively not hurt the consumer one penny after prices settled down, the producer always paying the duty, supply and demand ruling the market.

H. T. HINCKS, WIGSTON HALL, LEICESTER ; Farmer and Auctioneer.

The duty would help materially, but Colonial produce should pay 5 %, and foreign 10 %. Every fat beast I raise from calf-hood up to maturity costs me, in rates and charges on land, 10 % on what he eventually makes.

JOHN AND STEPHEN G. MURTLAND, LIMAVADY, CO. LONDONDERRY ; Farmers.

The proposed tax will materially assist us by preventing the foreigner from flooding our markets so easily, and helping to pay our taxes. Perhaps in time it may be the means of bringing about Free Trade all round.

S. J. KNIGHT, EAST DUNDY, BRISTOL ; Farmer.

If the 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce meant a higher price by that amount for home produce, it, of course, would be a great benefit to agriculturists. But, knowing the fact that all countries are producing for the British market more largely every year, and that there is little or no other outlet for their produce, I feel sure that they would pay the duty by taking a little less for their goods, and we at home would get no benefit. However, it would help largely our Imperial taxes, and for that reason alone the majority in the countryside will support the reform.

J. MARK, MYROE, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

If the proposed tax lessened the foreign supply, it would benefit us, as better demand would as a rule mean better prices. It will not lessen the foreign supply, and so will not lead to better prices for home production, but it will benefit the Treasury immensely.

F. R. DANIELL, OAKHAM, RUTLAND ; Farmer.

The 5 % is so slight a rise that the relief in taxation is the most likely benefit. Meat all round does not average 4d. a lb., and the duty thus works out at $\frac{1}{4}$ d. on 1 lb.

R. B. ONIONS, KYLETELISHA, MARYBOROUGH, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

These duties are so low that much benefit cannot be expected from them. They would help a little, perhaps not more than about 2 %. Their greatest help would be in the amount of taxation realized from them, which would enable the Government to lighten taxation in other respects.

S. E. DEAN & SONS, DOWSBY HALL, BOURNE, Lincs. ; Farmers.

It is very questionable whether the 5 % duty on meat would increase the price in this country, but it must be a benefit, as it would raise a large sum for revenue, and so relieve the heavy taxation.

C. A. WEBB, QUARTERTOWN, MALLOW, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would bring in a good deal of money, thereby relieving farmers of a certain amount of taxation. It might after a time benefit the producer by a small advance in price.

B. DUDFIELD, WINCHCOMBE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty would help to pay our expenses, rates, &c. Officials cost us a lot—schoolmasters, road surveyors, inspectors of different kinds. Most of these men have but little or no rent, rates or taxes to pay, no risk, no capital at stake, and yet they are far better off than the man who is called the farmer, who has some £3,000 or £4,000 invested in the land. I don't think this is as it should be.

W. R. DIXON, CAMBRIDGE FARM, LYNSTED, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT ; Farmer.

The duty would help the Exchequer more than the farmer, but the Exchequer might help the farmer in the way of taxes.

W. S. SWIFT, WALKERINGHAM, GAINSBORO', NOTTS. ; Farmer.

The tax, not being large enough to reduce supply, would be no advantage personally to me, but would to the country by reducing taxation.

1841

Proposed 5 % Duty on Meat and Dairy Produce

Beneficial if Taxes reduced

—continued.

W. PUDDIPHATT, CHESHAM, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

Butter should be taxed, but 5 % is not much. That will not raise the price in this country. It will help the taxpayer. I keep about 20 cows, sell some butter, some new milk, and fat some calves, but am not able to put my eggs all in one basket.

W. BLACKLER, BROADHEMPSTON, TOTNES, DEVON ; Farmer.

With regard to the 5 % duty suggested on meat, I look on it as a valuable help to the Exchequer, but theorise as you like, it will take a clever man to find out its practical effect. Supply and demand, in spite of such small duties, will rule the market price. The home producer pays a far heavier tax on everything he produces, in the form of rates and taxes, than that suggested for the foreigner. In the name of common fairness why should not the foreigner bear some small proportion of the heavy burden borne by the British producer ?

FORM No. 12,033. Farmer.

The duty would help the revenue as it did before, but it is a question whether it would benefit the farmer very long. I think the greatest benefit to me as a farmer would be to get other nations to lower their tariffs. I send a good many sheep abroad, but people who buy them complain of the expense of getting them there, and it is almost impossible to get them into the States now, owing to the high tariff.

1842

J. COULTHARD, FAUGH BEECHES, HEADS NOOK, CARLISLE, CUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

This small duty would not benefit me in the industry that I am engaged in, as it would not raise the price of any of my produce, but it would raise some revenue, and might benefit me in that way. It would only be fair that those who use our country as a market should pay something towards it. The way we are at present is like me keeping a grocer's shop and paying the rent, rates and taxes, and allowing all the other grocers to come and do business free in it.

FORM No. 12,494. Bacon, Butter Merchant, &c.

We do not believe a 5 % duty would materially reduce the supply of foreign bacon, as the foreign farmer has to a large extent no other market than this country. We do not believe this duty would be sufficient to protect the British farmer, but if a considerable portion of the revenue derived from income tax were utilised to reduce the burdens at present laid upon the landed industry, then we think a great step in advance would have been taken. We can see no good reason why bacon should be excluded from the list of foreign meat and dairy produce which it is proposed to tax, as bacon can no longer be called essentially the poor man's food. The Board of Trade tables show that even the average agricultural labourer and his family consume more beef and mutton than bacon, while the urban workman eats still less bacon in proportion to beef and mutton.

1843

Of little Benefit

In the case of 61 farmers in various parts of the Kingdom general statements are made to the effect that a 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would benefit them a little. Other replies are as follows :—

A. RHIBBLE, BROON HOUSE, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

The duty on meat should be a slight benefit, our heaviest imports at present being from the Argentine and the U.S.A. In a short time, however, any increase in profit there may be will soon disappear, as the great emigration to Canada at present going on is sure to produce for us great quantities of meat. What we want is a free market to buy in. We compete with the foreigner when selling the finished article, and ought to have the same privilege when buying the raw material.

F. H. TAYLOR, SOMERFORD, BREWOOD, STAFFORD ; Farmer.

This duty will benefit us very little. Will it be possible to prevent American stock and produce passing through Canada and being shipped as Colonial ?

I. MORTON, WESTEND, WICKWAR, R.S.O., GLOS. ; Farmer.

The suggested duty on meat may be a little benefit ; on dairy produce none.

1844

J. W. MURPHY, HILL HOUSE, CASHEL, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

I do not expect much benefit from the duty, but it is a step in the right direction. Neither the cutting down of rents in Land Court, nor Land Purchase would enable us to compete against the world, if allowed to send their produce free into this country. They pay nominal rents, and the cost of shipping is small. We pay good rents, heavy taxes, and labour is expensive. The climate here is greatly against us for everything we can produce from the land. Of course cheap food is a national benefit, but let us produce a good proportion ourselves and work the land. This we cannot do, with the world sending everything free to England, and at such a small cost of transit.

H. FITZWALTER PLUMPTRE, GOODNESTONE, NEAR DOVER ; Farmer.

The duty would not make much difference, as far as I can see. A small import duty appears in practice (whatever the best books may say) to be paid by producer and importer between them, and does not appreciably raise the price of the article to the consumer. The only thing that would seriously help the British farmer would be a rise in prices.

FORM No. 12,204. Farmer.

My flock being Southdowns, and the milk being required warm in Dover, I do not suppose the duty would advantage me more than 1 %.

W. W. KEEL, STANTON DREW, BRISTOL, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

The duty would make very little difference to the dairy farmer, as our Colonies send us the bulk of our cheese, and it is not intended to put a duty on bacon, which is the chief product of the dairy farmer.

A. F. DAVIES, BROAD OAK, BROUGHTON, CHESTER, FLINTSHIRE ; Farmer.

We might benefit slightly by a duty on meat, but enough dairy produce would soon be sent by Colonies to keep markets at a low price.

T. M. BARKER, COOLBOY HOUSE, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

The above duty would not matter much to my business as I sell very few fat beasts, and dairy only to supply the house. I rear all my young stock on the cows, and when the former get to maturity I dispose of them to city dairymen, &c., and, considering the number that I sell every year, it would not matter much in either case. Of course if a duty were imposed on all meat imported it would mean a higher price for our beef, &c., and then the store cattle would go up accordingly and likewise with dairy produce.

A. C. HALL, GREAT ROLLRIGHT, CHIPPING NORTON, OXON. ; Farmer.

Such a duty would benefit me very slightly. The markets for home and foreign or Colonial meat and dairy produce being distinct, a duty on foreign would not, in my opinion, affect the price of home produce to any extent. I however favour such a duty as a benefit to the Colonies without seriously affecting the poor consumer in this country.

E. M. NUNNELEY, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ; Farmer.

These duties might benefit me very slightly. If, however, a duty were placed on foreign cakes and other feeding stuffs (as I suppose would be the case) I should probably lose more than I should gain by the duty on meat.

TEADY McERLEAN, CLADY, PORTGLENONE ; Tea, Wine, Flour and Irish Produce Merchant.

The duty may be of slight advantage as regards dairy produce, but as regards meat the Colonials are our great rivals at present.

PROFESSOR WILLIAMS, DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF WALES, ABERYSTWYTH.

The Welsh farmer should derive some benefit from the duty, but it would be very slight.

E. J. TUETON, HORKSTOW, HULL ; Farmer.

The suggested duty on meat and dairy produce would benefit me for a time, but eventually we should be flooded with Colonial produce.

T. H. PEARCE, LONG ASHTON, BRISTOL ; Farmer.

For the benefit of farmers linseed cake should come in free, if not it would make fattening cattle and sheep more expensive.

E. W. BETTS, BABINGLEY, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat would not be of much benefit, as the increasing supplies of live and dead meat from our Colonies would soon bring prices to the present level.

The replies of 46 farmers indicate the belief that a 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would be of benefit to them. Other replies are as follows :—

C. B. FISHER, DESBOROUGH, MARKET HARBOUROUGH, NOTTS. ; Land Agent.

The duty on meat would not be any advantage. Should prefer to admit Canadian stores free.

FORM NO. 12,403. Farmer

I am strongly opposed to the importation of store stock, which I am afraid would be the means of spreading disease all over the country. The duty will not benefit the British farmer. If our produce does not make more, land will have to come down to enable us to hold our ground.

FORM NO. 12,781. Farmer.

The duties would not benefit me in any way. I cannot afford to pay a girl or boy to feed a pig and have to buy meat. I am not aware of the distinction that is to be made between live meat and dead meat, therefore I can give no opinion. I am for free trade in the fullest sense of the word. How did the people pay rent formerly when a fat grass-fed cow could be bought for 16s., a stall-fed ox for £1 4s. and a fat sheep for 4s. and everything else cheap accordingly ? The people in those days in Ireland used to have 4 kinds of meat for dinner, they used to make their own beer, and had no duty to pay for it.

E. PIPER, IRIDGE PLACE, HURST GREEN, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

5 % on meat and dairy produce will not raise the price. If all produce was marked "foreign," and the consumer knew what he was buying, it might help the home producer.

B. J. HODGSON, LEYBURN, YORKSHIRE ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would not benefit me at all, as I am such a distance from any large town. (The railway rates are so great.

1849 Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce

Of no Benefit
—continued.

FORM No. 12,068. Farmer.

The taxes on meat and dairy produce will not materially alter the price of meat, which is now far too low. Beef cannot be produced with any profit to the graziers in this country at recent prices (6d. per lb.), unless the breeder takes a much less price for the animals he breeds. I write as a grazier.

G. P. TERRETT, MEAT INSPECTOR'S OFFICE, CENTRAL MARKETS, SMITHFIELD, LONDON, E.C.

The proposed duty will not make any difference in the price to the consumer, as the market fluctuations often reach 30 % or 40 % in a few weeks.

A. C. MARRIAGE, PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE ; Farmer.

We shall have to pay more for our feeding stuffs to make the meat. How is 5 % to materially help the producer ?

W. BROWN, LAURENCEKIRK, KINCARDINE ; Farmer.

It would not benefit a tenant and only in course of time the proprietor. But beef and dairy produce is dear enough, especially for the consumer.

1850

A. AMOS, SPRING GROVE FARM, WYE, KENT ; Farmer.

A duty on meat would probably make meat dearer by the amount of duty, but I do not think the tax on cake and manures would probably more than counterbalance it, as I export rams, and these consume a lot of cake and corn. I will never ask that food be made dearer by taxation, it would be tantamount to asking for outdoor relief. If wages rose in consequence I should be still worse off, but history records that wages were lower under protection. By changing my system of cultivation I am made to pay from 10s. to 15s. per acre more than my neighbours for similar land, their rents having fallen more than mine.

J. PINKERTON, SECON, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM ; Farmer.

With regard to a duty on meat and dairy produce ; it matters not to us except from a sentimental point of view, whether the opposition come from Canada or the U.S.A. We are, it seems, under either method to have to compete with our worn-out soil against the virgin territories that are yearly being opened up. Protection is simply a bonus to the cultivator, and it may prove safer in the long run for the consumer to pay a little extra as he goes along, than to become absolutely and entirely dependent on the foreigner ; and in this struggle for existence all outsiders are foreigners.

J. MCGLINCHY, J.P., STRABANE, DONEGAL ; Merchant.

The duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce would not affect my business in any way. The proposed duty of 5 % on dairy produce might be a slight advantage to Irish butter makers, as Danish butter still has rather the best of the butter market both in Great Britain and Ireland. As regards 5 % duty on foreign meats I would oppose it, as foreign meats are still sold much cheaper than home produce. 5 % would make so little difference, it would not benefit the home producer and we should only be taxing our manufacturing artisans and labourers who buy these foreign products, instead of taxing the foreign producer.

1851

WM. COGGAN, 58, THURLOW PARK ROAD, DULWICH ; Retailer of Meat.

As a retailer of meat, anything which adds to the cost of placing the finished article on the market must be viewed with disfavour ; a duty of 5 % on American and best Continental meat (being on an average $\frac{1}{3}$ of a penny per pound) is not likely to benefit the retailer. The effect would be a rise in the price of all best meat—especially beef—unless our graziers have a more plentiful supply of store cattle by the readmission of Canadian stores. On South American meat, costing about half the price of above, the trade would not be seriously affected, nor the price appreciably raised to the consumer. This I regard as the most important point, as this meat is entirely purchased by the working classes. Notwithstanding what I have said on the subject of personal or trade interest, I still favour fiscal reform, believing such action must eventually give an impetus to all trades and consequently increase the spending power of the people generally.

J. W. MARTIN, NORTH END PLACE, FELSTEAD, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The proposed taxes would be of no benefit at all, except during a short interregnum, while Canada and Australia were preparing to take the place of the U.S.A., and even during that period the benefit would be inappreciable.

J. MACKESSACK, KINLOSS, FORRES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

I believe the foreigner would pay the duty and send as much as ever, as he has practically no other outlet for beef and mutton.

W. REID, 160, CENTRAL MEAT MARKET, LONDON, E.C. ; Wholesale Cattle and Meat Salesman.

These duties would not benefit me in any way, nor on the other hand would they do me any harm unless they considerably reduced or stopped importation. There would be a great danger of that taking place with a duty of 5 %. A duty of $2\frac{1}{2}$ % on meat and other food stuffs imported from foreign countries would be a large source of income, and yet would not materially reduce the importation or affect the price of food.

J. WILLIAMS, TULLOW LODGE, THOMASTOWN, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

The bullocks I used to get £23 per head for are now worth about £16 or £17. You will see how futile it is to expect the percentage mentioned, to place us in a position to feed cattle to beef. Our stores are £2 per head too dear to commence with. Before the foreigner came I could buy good beef and mutton at 7d. to 8d.

1852

1853

per lb., now I pay 8d. for beef and 9d. for mutton, and where does the saving come in to the consumer? The price of American pork at first in this country was 2d. to 3d., it has gone as high as 7d. since. Whatever free trade did for England it ruined Ireland, as we have no manufactories.

T. H. SCOTT, GROVE HOUSE, FILEY, E. YORKS. ; Manager of Landed Property.

This duty will not materially benefit the British farmer. What would assist him would be a law to compel every butcher or vendor of meat to exhibit above his shop in letters of not less than 6 inches in height a notice to this effect, "Foreign Meat Sold Here." An enormous quantity of foreign meat is sold to the public as British. English meat can always hold its own market. I do not say that foreign meat is unwholesome, but many people who are now supplied with foreign meat in place of English would never purchase it if they knew. They pay the price for the best English meat and get served with foreign.

T. CHRISTIAN, DROXFORD, HANTS ; Farmer.

The slight gain in price of meat will be lost through increased cost in production, and this through increased price of feeding stuffs.

J. SPICER, BOVINGTON FARM, WOOL, DORSET ; Farmer.

We shall not receive any benefit directly as it is simply a case of supply and demand. If there is a large supply, a duty of 5 % would not raise prices.

1854

W. IRELAND, FAIRLADIES, ST. BEES ; Farmer.

Our own Colonies are large competitors in this line of business, so the rise in the price would probably be quite a nominal one. If the price rose half the amount of the duty, it would mean that I should receive for my dairy produce some £10 per annum more than I do at present. This would be more than swallowed up in the increased cost of feeding stuffs.

A. MACINTYRE, ROTHESAY, ISLE OF BUTE ; Farmer.

The duty is likely to be of benefit for a few years. It would ultimately prove a great misfortune to farmers generally, if Colonial produce were admitted free, as they alone would reap the full benefit, and it is more than probable our difficulty in obtaining labour would increase, as under present conditions Canada is making every effort to attract our best labourers.

ARTHUR F. PARTRIDGE, WHARTON COURT, LEOMINSTER ; Farmer.

My last year's bullock fattening has been done at a great loss, and as long as our markets are flooded with foreign beef and mutton, the less it will pay. Foreign or Colonial, the latter will flood us in time.

1855

W. S. YOUNG, KIRKCUBBIN, CO. DOWN ; Farmer.

The proposed duty on dairy produce might have the effect of stiffening prices here, but I am not sanguine of any good resulting from the proposed duty on meat. The tendency to enhanced values produced by the imposition of a 5 % duty on foreign meat would be neutralised by increased supplies from the Colonies.

T. WARD, CARRINGTON GRANGE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE ; Farmer.

I should probably never discover any duty had been imposed. Surely the manufacturer and consumer will have greatly the better of the bargain, for whereas the one has little to fear for a long time from Colonial manufacturers, the farmer will still have his market as badly overloaded with Colonial and foreign grain and meat. There is a strong suspicion abroad among farmers that the empire is to be cemented chiefly at their expense.

WILLIAM DUTHIE, TARVES, ABERDEEN ; Farmer.

Such duties seem to me calculated to encourage and benefit Colonial agriculture and to greatly enlarge its area. No appreciable advantage will accrue to depressed agriculture at home from those proposals.

W. BARBER, MONIAIVE, DUMFRIESSHIRE ; Farmer.

1856

A duty of even 5 % on foreign meat would tend to raise the price of home produce, and for a year or two might bring higher prices to the home producer, but this is by no means certain, and mutton brought from Australia and New Zealand is the biggest form of opposition we have. To help the British mutton producer it seems to me a tax on foreign meat will be very little, if any good, Colonial produce being by far the biggest competitor in the market, and it is quite as bad to have prices kept down by the colonist as by the foreigner. But granting that prices of mutton and corn did increase, would this mean more than a temporary advantage to the farmer? Leases now-a-days are generally short and rents would immediately rise. Wages have for years shown a tendency to increase, and if these are still further raised, as is confidently predicted by those who are anxious for tariff reform—the farmer would be shortly in a worse position than ever.

C. A. CHANDOS-POLE, KIRK-LANGLEY, DERBY ; Farmer.

The British farmer cannot possibly compete with the foreign and Colonial meat producer except as regards quality. Our large rents and heavy railway rates are too great a handicap; 2d. an acre rent and cheap ocean freights against say 30s. rent plus rates, taxes and heavy rail rates are all in favour of the Colonial. I fail to see how the proposed duties are to benefit the British farmer, they only benefit the Colonials. If it will reduce the Income Tax I am in favour of it.

1857 **Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

Of no Benefit
—continued.

J. OLIVER, LYNWOOD HOUSE, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

The duties suggested will not benefit the British farmer directly. The preference proposed to be given to the Colonies should have the effect of fostering and increasing the prosperity of the meat industry there. This will lead to an increase of production in these Colonies, and I am of opinion that any decrease in the importation to Great Britain of meat from foreign countries caused by the duty, will be much more than compensated by the increase which will in time come from the Colonies. I believe, however, that any change in the fiscal policy of this country, which will have the effect of bringing prosperity to many languishing industries, and at the same time of bettering the condition of the wage-earning classes, will through the inevitable increase in the consumption of butcher's meat, operate with great benefit in favour of the British farmer.

Colonial Preference **FORM NO. 12,450. Farmer.**

The Colonials would probably benefit, and we could not possibly do so. The sort of taxation proposed just means a rise all round in the things the farmer has to buy and the Colonial preference scheme would effectually prevent a rise in what we have to sell. Through an oversight no doubt, you have omitted all reference to the proposed 10 % duty on imported machinery and to the suggested rise in wages to follow. Farmers have not yet forgotten the English makers "combine" defeated only 2 years ago.

P. J. O'REILLY, CROSSMOLINA, MAYO ; Farmer.

The proposed duty is quite useless, as it is the Colonial meat that is keeping down the price. The only concession we want is not to allow any live stock into the United Kingdom.

A. R. WHITE, MERE, WILTS. ; Farmer.

Colonial produce being admitted free will keep prices of meat and dairy produce from rising to any appreciable extent, so I should not apprehend any benefit would be derived.

J. K. ECCLES, LANDENS, HORLEY, SURREY ; Farmer.

A duty on meat and dairy produce of 5 % may have a temporary effect in raising the prices of home produce, but if it stimulates the Colonies to import more produce, it will in the end produce a greater glut than before, and the last state of farmers will be worse than the first.

E. BROUGHALL, WYKEY HOUSE, RUYTON ELEVEN TOWNS, SALOP ; Farmer.

I am not very sanguine as to the proposed duty being any benefit to agriculture, as the Colonies will in a very little time supply all we want.

G. EAMES, LINC FARM, MIDHURST, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

We shall get a corresponding benefit until the Colonies can fill the gap, and then none.

FORM NO. 12,264.

The duty should be 5 % on Colonial produce and 10 % on foreign.

G. C. ALEXANDER, HUGLETTS FARM, HEATHFIELD, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

Farmers should benefit the 5 %, i.e., about £1 on the price of a fat beast. Colonials should be taxed one-half the amount charged on other countries.

P. WHEELER, BULLEY FARM, NEAR GLOUCESTER ; Farmer.

I am afraid the foreigner will not pay the tax unless some scale is utilised. The Colonials should pay 2½ %.

J. WILLINGTON, J.P., ST. KIERANS, BIRR, KING'S CO. ; Farmer.

The proposed duty is not much good unless the Colonies pay 5 % and all other countries 10 %.

J. BURGESS-ADAMS, THE MERE, ENVILLE, NEAR STOURBRIDGE, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

I would suggest that Colonial produce pay a duty and foreign double the duty on Colonial, say, 3 % Colonial and 6 % foreign. I think this would benefit us more than a duty on corn.

ROBERT CRAIG, GRONDON PARK, STOCK, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The benefit would be likely to correspond with the duty imposed, which would not be very great. Colonial produce should pay ½ duty.

R. F. WOODCOCK, HASLEMERE, SURREY ; Farmer.

5 % tax on meat and dairy produce would not benefit at all. It should be 10 % duty from foreign countries, 5 % duty from Colonies.

J. BRUCE, GARTLY, R.S.O., ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

I would not expect to receive much benefit from a 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce imported from foreign countries. I would have a duty on all, with a preference in favour of the Colonies.

W. FRANKISH, CULME, ST. CATHERINE'S, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

Such duties would prove beneficial to farmers. It is again a question whether our Colonies should not be charged ½ the duty, unless trading freely with us,

1858

1859

1860

1861

LT.-COL. J. COUSSMAKER, WESTWOOD, NORMANDY, GUILDFORD, SURREY; Farmer.

Any duty which will lessen the burdens on the land is desirable—as far as meat is concerned. The low prices which now rule have compelled me to give up the fattening of cattle, which used to be a feature of my father's farming. Since March, 1894, I have not tied any up. Two-year-old steers, weighing 70 stone each, only fetched £12 apiece, and their food had cost considerably more than that. Fat calves and heifers with calves at foot are more remunerative, and the duty suggested above does not touch them. I fail to see why Colonial produce should be entirely free. Let the foreigner pay 5 % and the Colonial 1 %.

A. F. NICHOL, BRADFORD, BELFORD, NORTHUMBERLAND; Farmer.

The same would hold good with meat and dairy produce as with corn. I think Colonial produce should pay a small tax.

J. W. DEENNAN, CARSE HALL, LIMAVADY JUNCT., CO. LONDONDERRY; Farmer.

The duty may be a little benefit; still I think Colonial produce should pay a little.

FORM NO. 12,716. Farmer.

The duty would assist me, as I largely depend on sale of fat cattle. A slight duty ought to be imposed on our Colonial meat. A few years ago the rabbits which I killed on this farm were a valuable asset, but now, owing to Colonial competition, particularly Australian iced rabbits, it hardly pays to touch them here.

1862

W. HIPWELL, SHARNBROOK, BEDS.; Farmer.

The duty would be decidedly beneficial, but there should be a small duty, say $2\frac{1}{2}$ %, on both foreign and Colonial, to balance our taxation, and a larger duty on foreign only, say an extra 5 %, making $7\frac{1}{2}$ %. It would make no difference to retail prices here.

FORM NO. 12,133. Farmer.

I have no experience of dairying directly. Beef, mutton and pork vary greatly in price. 5%, with $2\frac{1}{2}$ % duty on Colonial, would be a good duty to try on these and dairy produce.

G. W. RACKHAM, HILL FARM, HETHEL, NORWICH, NORFOLK; Farmer.

The duty, if it should raise the price (which I do not expect), would be a little help, and cause more meat and dairy produce to be produced. Colonial produce $\frac{1}{2}$ duty.

ROBERT ONIONS, BORRIS, MARYBORO', QUEEN'S CO.; Farmer.

I highly approve of duties as named by Mr. Chamberlain, but cannot see any benefit to the Irish agricultural industry if Colonial corn is admitted free. In my opinion, if duty named were put on raw corn, with another amount put on manufactured goods, such as flour, beef, bacon, butter, &c., Irish farming industry would be greatly advanced, labouring classes employed, milling industries revived, land now uncultivated would be again brought into requisition, and, in fact, a thorough revival of trade in all, small as well as large, industries would result, combined with purchase of land.

1863

J. FINDLAY, SPRINGHILL, BAILLIESTON, LANARK; Farmer.

The duty would benefit me to a slight extent. I fail to see why Colonial produce should not be taxed—British produce is taxed for local and imperial purposes.

MAJOR E. W. GUINNESS, TIBBADDEN, RATHFARNHAM, DUBLIN; Farmer.

This duty will benefit me more than the duty on corn, as beef and mutton are my principal produce. The duty is, however, very small, but sufficient to begin with. It will be almost entirely borne by the importers, and be a great relief to the revenue. It will not materially increase the price to the consumer of meat. The Colonies should give a suitable *quid pro quo*.

G. A. FRASEE, LONESOME FARM, NEAR REIGATE, SURREY; Farmer.

5 % would be of no use, as the rates for putting same into our market being less than we can send from the farm to London markets, it would still leave the foreigner plenty of scope to produce and send to England, at a price far less than the British could sell. Also, although believing in favouring our Colonies as much as possible, the 5 % on Colonial produce should be put on, and a larger duty on foreign produce not from our Colonies. All foreign meat and dairy produce should be plainly marked foreign produce. A number of the British public are willing to pay the price for English meat, if they are sure they get it, but as the best of butchers nowadays sell both, how are the majority of people going to tell the difference?

1864

C. N. HUMBLE, DUNGARVAN, CO. WATERFORD; Farmer.

The duty would be most beneficial to me. I would not let in Canadian cattle free. How would you prevent American cattle being shipped from Canadian ports?

A. B. LEITCH, ALVES, FORBES, ELGIN; Farmer.

The 5 % suggested on meat and dairy produce would not be enough to make any appreciable difference to the branches of industry in which I am engaged. I am in favour of a preference being given to the Colonies.

LOED KESTEVEN, STAMFORD, Lincs. and NORTHANTS.; Farmer.

Very little, if any; and I protest against any Colonial preference.

1865 Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Products

G. F. GAY, PORTON, SALISBURY, WILTS ; Farmer.

This would be a preferential rate for the Colonies, but no advantage to the English agriculturists, unless the price rose, which it would not.

Colonial Preference
—continued.

COLONEL G. W. RAIKES, F.S.I., DUNNINGTON HEATH, ALCESTER, R.S.O., WARWICK ; Farmer.

This duty will be principally paid by the exporter. It will benefit the Colonial exporter more than the home producer, at the same time it must stiffen the home trade. My trade being all retail I do not expect any benefit.

This proposal will be simply a preferential duty in favour of our Colonies as soon as trade settles down. Probably the first shock of the duty will temporarily check the importation of Danish butter, French eggs, etc., and the British farmer may reap some little benefit, but 5 % duty on meat will make no difference. Since the dead meat importation has been organised to its present colossal trade, the price of English meat has dropped from an average of 9d. to an average of 7d. per lb. I doubt whether a 50 % duty on imported foreign meat would restore these prices. Any legislation in this direction which directly benefits British farmers must be of such a drastic nature as to sensibly raise prices, and this will be naturally and successfully opposed by the wage-earning classes of this country. The only way in which the Government can benefit farmers without loss to other members of the community is by making the land they occupy free of taxation.

To admit wheat from the Colonies free, and put a duty of 10 % on flour from the Colonies would simply mean ruination to the Colonial millers, and place them at a decided disadvantage compared with the millers in the United States or other foreign countries. If we do not admit the Colonial flour free as well as the Colonial wheat, it will mean that the British consumer will have to pay practically the full duty on the flour, because the English mills for many years to come could not increase their capacity to grind all the flour consumed in the United Kingdom, and until they did so, being without any competition, they would add to the price of their flour as extra profit. Even with the aid of the Colonial mills, the capacity would still be insufficient to supply the whole requirements of Great Britain for some time, until the capacity of the mills within the Empire could be increased, but, on account of the competition with the flour from the Colonial mills, the British mills could only at the most add part of the duty to the price until such time as the milling capacity within the Empire was sufficient to supply the demand to such an extent that the foreigners would have to pay the duty themselves in order to compete successfully with the mills of the Empire, which would be very shortly, if the Colonial grain products were admitted on the same basis as the Colonial grain, as they should be, free.

G. OLDEN, SHERFIELD MILL, ROMSEY, HANTS ; Miller and Corn Merchant.

The abolition of the sugar bounty was a great hurt to this country, especially as regards labour, in many cases. I think preferential tariffs for our Colonies should be given.

C. R. SMITH & SONS, LTD., PORTSLADE-BY-SEA, BRIGHTON ; Flour Millers.

A preferential tariff ought to increase the growth of Colonial cereals.

C. A. JENN, KINGSLEY VILLA, TOWN MILLS, BLACK TORRINGTON, NORTH DEVON ; Miller.

Some favour should be given to our Colonies.

W. BAILEY AND EXORS. OF LATE T. WORTHINGTON, HUMBERSTONE GATE, LEICESTER.

Personally, I have nothing to send to either our Colonies or foreign countries, but presuming that we give preference to all Colonial goods and they do likewise to ours, it would probably happen that greatly increased quantities of boots and hosiery would be exported to those Colonies from Leicester, which would be the means of making our town once more prosperous (it is in a very bad state now), and I should share in the general prosperity.

R. S. SIMPSON, PRESTON ; Butter Merchant.

I favour a fair free market to all Colonials.

GEORGE ROFFEY & SON, 41, SEETHING LANE, TOWER STREET, LONDON, E.C. ; Grain Merchants.

Preferential duties would enable our Colonies to compete on more favourable terms with America, Argentina and Russia. The importation from British possessions varies according to their crops being good or bad, but I believe they are steadily increasing and I would do so to an enormous extent under fair preferential treatment.

SEGAR & TUNNICLIFFE, 9, BRUNSWICK STREET, LIVERPOOL ; Grain Merchants.

The effect of a preferential tariff for Colonial-grown grain would certainly be to increase the percentage imported considerably. There is at present a large quantity of Indian and of Australian wheat (when available) taken each season by buyers on the Continent of Europe. Under Colonial preference this would nearly all reach this country, while the Continental buyer would be supplied with foreign-grown grain, the latter having been placed under a disability in Great Britain. Generally speaking, the quantity of Indian and Australian wheat delivered at Continental ports is almost equal (in each year) to that arriving in this country.

H. M. LEASK & CO., 14-19, SIR JOHN ROGERSON'S QUAY, DUBLIN ; Linseed Cake Manufacturers, &c.

Personally, we would be seriously injured by giving a preferential tariff to the Colonies, say Canada, for instance.

W. BODDINGTON, CUDDINGTON, BUCKS. ; Miller.

We are of opinion that the Colonies should be encouraged to send corn so that it may be ground in this country and that we may get the sale of the offals.

1866

1867

1868

W. JOHNSTONE, CORN EXCHANGE, 81, HOPE STREET, GLASGOW; Grain Merchant.

I am convinced that a preferential tariff in favour of reciprocating countries would quickly open markets now closed to us.

C. R. CLARK, THE SQUARE, RETFORD, NOTTS.; Seed Grower and Merchant.

I consider it would be a great boon to the seed growers of this country if we could have preferential tariffs with our Colonies and a retaliatory tariff with the foreigner.

WILSON, KERR & Co., 26, BREAD STREET, EDINBURGH; Provision Merchants.

Nothing has occurred to affect our business directly, but it is better to nurse our own Colonies than foreigners, as we will certainly find if the country goes to war.

In the case of several farmers it is indicated in general terms that a 5 % duty would not suffice to benefit their form of agriculture. Other replies are as follows:— **Higher Duty desired**

J. GIBSON, OMAGH, TYRONE, IRELAND; Farmer.

These duties would help, but are too small; 10 % would be better.

G. R. MACKESSACK, ARDGYE, ELGIN, SCOTLAND; Farmer.

They would be of considerable benefit, but 10 % would be better.

G. COWING, YATESBURY, CALNE, WILTS.; Farmer.

5 % is not enough. Should make it 10 %.

A. O'CONNOR, CELBRIDGE, KILDARE; Farmer.

10 % duty on foreign meat would be little enough.

SIR H. H. SCOTT, HIPSBURN, LESBURY, NORTHUMBERLAND; Farmer.

Duties a certain advantage, but would require to be higher to have much effect in this country, say 7½ % or 10 %.

C. BARWELL FIELD, BOWMANS, COLNEY, ST. ALBANS, HERTS.; Farmer.

Every little helps. Duty ought to be 20 %.

J. WATT, CARLISLE; Farmer.

It will be a decided advantage, although the duty should not be less than 15 %. This would encourage the fattening of cattle to a great extent, and make it more profitable than at present. The return from this process is very small indeed.

A. PARKHILL, CULLION, CO. LONDONDERRY, IRELAND; Farmer.

Yes, I approve very much of a duty on meat and dairy produce. A duty of 10 % on dairy produce would be little enough. The duty would benefit me nearly to the extent of the duty. The price of butter this summer was lower in Londonderry market than for years, the best at one time only reaching 8½d. per lb. Butter at this price cannot pay. I consider a duty of 5 % on beef and 10 % on dairy produce is absolutely necessary if the land is to be farmed at all.

G. JACK, COLINTON, MIDLOTHIAN; Farmer.

The duty on meat should be 10 %, that is beef, mutton and pork. Present prices barely pay for feeding.

H. CRANFIELD, BUCKDEN, HUNTINGDON; Farmer.

Why not 10 %. Argentine would not diminish one iota their cattle or sheep expansion for a 10 % duty. If they have a surplus, it is bound to come here, at what price they can get. If they have a shortage, values on this side will rise, duty or no duty.

J. HUNTER, BLAKELAW FARM, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, NORTHUMBERLAND; Farmer.

The duty should be at least 10 % to benefit English farmers; this duty should also be upon hay, straw, and potatoes, as large quantities of this produce are imported into Newcastle. Many large horse-owners never use home-grown hay or straw, and if potatoes rise a little in price within a week or two cargoes of 600 to 700 tons arrive in Newcastle from Germany and Holland. Hay comes from all the world nearly.

J. BOYD, TUBBER, CHURCHTOWN, DERRY, DONEGAL; Farmer.

As a dairy farmer, rearing a large number of cattle, the duty which Mr. Chamberlain proposes to put on these commodities will benefit the Irish farmer to a very great extent. A duty of 5 % would benefit the Irish farmer slightly, because of the costly method of feeding and expense of attendance he has to contend with. Compared with the foreigner, who can fatten large numbers of cattle in the open fields on grass with very little cost, the Irish farmer (especially in the North of Ireland) has to fatten in the house, on costly foods imported from abroad, such as cotton cake and linseed cake. Then again, cattle can be sent quite as cheap or cheaper from North and South America to the English and Scotch markets than from this district. On account of above reasons I would suggest a much heavier duty, say 10 % being put on foreign cattle coming into the British Isles. A 5 % duty would benefit me to a small extent, because it would raise the price of Irish butter in the London market and keep foreign butter from coming in.

1873 **Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

Higher Duty desired
—continued.

E. S. L. COLLINS, WELLS, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

Always excepting our Colonial produce, 5 % on meat or dairy produce is not sufficient to benefit any farmer. Meat should be at least 10 % and dairy produce 20 %. If these import duties were imposed, British produce would then fetch a fair price, and it would not hurt the consumer much, if at all.

J. JAMES, WHITCHURCH, NEAR STRATFORD-ON-AVON, WARWICKSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty ought to be 10 %, and then we should derive some benefit.

T. MOLYNEUX, J.P., THE DECOY, DUNLAVIN, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

10 % duty on meat and dairy produce is little enough, because at the present price of beef and mutton it can't be produced to pay rent and taxes in Ireland. It is very unfair to let everything into England free when most countries charge a heavy duty on anything we send to them. I define retaliation as charging duty at the same rate as the country sending the stuff charges England. We feel the want of a tariff more this year than ever before, as the markets are so flooded with foreign meat that we can hardly sell our cattle, unless they are very well finished, and people on second-class land find it expensive to so finish them, and they get no more than the rent and cost of feeding stuffs out of their cattle ; then what are they to live on ?

W. KELLY GREHAN, ROSCOMMON, CO. ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

The duty on meat and dairy produce is not nearly enough. I would say at least 10 %, and allow Colonial produce free, but give us the same facilities for sending our stuff to the market as our Colonial friends. This will affect Ireland more than any other part of the British Isles, as we export a lot of cattle to England, and the small farmer will have his share in profit if we can get more for our cattle across the water. As far as my personal interests are concerned, it would make a big difference, as I should till more land, feed more stock, and be inclined to give more for labour, which I cannot do if the price of produce remains as at present.

J. O'CARBOLL, LISTOWEL, KERRY ; Farmer.

The proposed duties on meat and dairy produce would benefit me to a considerable extent. We in Munster would much prefer to see the duty on both 10 % rather than 5 %. What is to prevent shippers and exporters from, say, the U.S.A. sending meat, dead or alive, &c., via Canada, to this country, having first got up establishments in the former ? Such a thing could and would be done.

J. GLYNN, DUNMORE, GALWAY ; Farmer.

10 % should be put on all meat imported to Great Britain and 7½ % on dairy produce, and the same on all Colonial meat and dairy produce. If the duty is not put on all Colonial produce it would leave Great Britain as badly off as ever.

FORM NO. 12,696. Farmer.

If a duty of from 15 % to 20 % be put on meat and dairy produce, it would be of some substantial benefit to me. The Government should take over the railways, as at present they are a monopoly owned by capitalists who are only trying to make the most they can out of them without having any regard to the welfare of the country.

FORM NO. 12,277. Farmer.

All foreign meat and dairy produce should be taxed 10 %. It would encourage the raising of young stock, and dairy business, and to the raisers of fat stock it would be a great boon.

J. STEVENSON, RAMELTON, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

10 % on meat and dairy produce would please me better. It would give me a fair price for my fat cattle and for dairy produce.

C. D. WARNOCK, FINTONA, TYRONE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

10 % on all foreign meat, dairy produce, eggs, &c., would enable everyone to live, increase employment, and greatly increase produce.

J. HATBICK, CREGGAN, LONDONDERY ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % would be insufficient ; I would suggest 7 %.

R. C. WARNER, OAKSEY, MALMESBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce of foreign origin is hardly sufficient, it should at least be 7½ %—Colonial meat and dairy produce to be treated on a reciprocity basis. To benefit my industry—the making of beef, mutton, bacon, butter—would require a duty on the foreign imports of these products, and the admission of feeding stuffs, such as oil-seeds (not cakes), and barley, maize, locust, beans, peas, duty free.

R. GORMAN, NEWTOWN KELLS, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

Nothing less than 10 % would be much good.

D. E. BYRD, SPURSTOW HALL, TARPORLEY, CHESHIRE ; Farmer.

This is the best and most popular tax Mr. Chamberlain has suggested, and it will be of great advantage to the British agriculturist, but it should be higher than on corn—10 % would not be too high.

1874

1875

1876

1877

R. F. WOODCOCK, FEESFIELD, DISS, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

The duty is not enough—10 % from lands not Colonies ; 5 % from Colonies.

D. CUNNINGHAM, DALACHY, ABERDOUR, FIFESHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty is not at all enough ; it would require to be at least 7½ % to be of any benefit.

T. E. SMITH, KNEBWORTH, HERTS. ; Farmer.

I should prefer 10 % ; it is little enough, and Colonial produce free, provided we get reciprocity.

R. H. NORMAN, BOX FARM, NEWNHAM-ON-SEVERN ; Farmer.

This duty would benefit me a little, but at least 10 % should be put on dairy produce, as this really is the most expensive article of production on a farm. A dairy farmer and his labourers have never a day to call their own. Week in and week out, Sundays as well as Mondays, the stock has to be fed, milking has to be done. There are no half-holidays once or twice a week for the dairy farm labourer, consequently we have experienced lately a very great difficulty in getting reliable men. The better-class labourer will not be tied down to so regular and constant work at the wage we are able to pay them. They have education free, which enables them to take situations which are not nearly so regular and monotonous.

D. ALEXANDER, BLACKMORE, ESSEX ; Farmer.

5 % to 10 % on meat and dairy produce and the same on all flour and foreign corn, would make all the difference in making the cultivating of land a paying interest to the nation at large. It would bring back plenty of labourers to the land. Grass lands would soon be broken up, and the nation would be £20,000,000 richer every year.

J. FALCONER, MICHELDEVER, HANTS. ; Farmer.

As a feeder of considerable quantities of cattle and sheep, I think a 5 % duty on meat would have a tendency to steady the markets. The duty on dairy produce, to be of much benefit, ought to be at least 10 %, as dairying is one of the branches of British agriculture that could be extended and made profitable. It would have a tendency to steady the prices, so that British farmers would feel safe to undertake the production of the various dairy products on a larger scale.

W. SCOTT, ORCHARD, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

Such a duty as proposed would be no use at all for the benefit of farms such as mine. It would take 10 % to make any appreciable difference. Colonial produce in my opinion should all come in free.

J. BELL, ARTANA, DROMARA, Co. DOWN ; Farmer.

The average gross profits of this farm for the last 10 years have been about 30s. per Irish acre (33 Irish), this amounts to £49 10s. As Ireland must give up agriculture and become a grazing country, the coming products of land will chiefly be young cattle, beef, butter, and eggs. A duty upon these coming from foreign countries would certainly help Ireland, but 5 % duty or 1s. in the £1 would be so small that the advantage would hardly be felt. It would require 10 % duty to fairly meet the case. This would not be greatly felt by the working man if American bacon were admitted free. Of any advantage gained by the Irish farmer from the taxation of foreign imports, the landlords will certainly claim at least the half at the next revision of rent, and will no doubt get it from the Land Commission.

F. R. JACKSON, KILKEA HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, Co. KILDARE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The Argentine is just now sending over mutton supplied to butchers in Ireland at less than 4d. per lb. and beef less than 2½d. per lb. If Irish farmers got 5 % more than these prices, he could not sell without loss to himself, even if he had land free of rent. It takes something to winter cattle, and it takes cake to finish them for the butcher ; the only thing we have in our favour is that frozen meat is inferior in flavour to our own. However, this low-priced meat comes over and is sold and consumed to the detriment of our own meat trade. I consider 5 % better than nothing and very good to begin with. But we must go further to make the advantage to feeders or producers appreciable. 5 % would leave me about £80 per annum more on fat sheep and cattle.

A. JOYCE, LEENANE, Co. GALWAY ; Farmer.

5 % is too little for meat and dairy produce. ½d. per lb. should be put on meat and dairy produce imported, the Colonies excepted. Even 5 % would benefit me to the extent of £15 or £20 a year.

E. BRIDGMAN, ASKEATON, Co. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

The duty is too small and would not give us sufficient protection.

W. W. WEST, WISBECH, CAMBS. ; Farmer.

The duty suggested on meat is so small that it would hardly raise the price of meat in this country at all ; and also our Colonies would import so largely, both live and dead meat, that the price of the home-fed meat would not increase. However this duty on meat is one of the best features of the proposal, and certainly a step in the right direction and might easily be increased later. Under this preference our Colonies would probably import so largely in the near future that we should be almost, if not quite, self supporting. This district is not much adapted for the dairying industry and the proposed duty would hardly affect us.

M. H. FOSTER, WYMONDLEY, STEVENAGE, HERTS. ; Farmer.

Proposed duty too low ; all foreign produce should be marked for benefit of consumer.

1878

1879

1880

1881

**Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce****Higher Duty desired
—continued.****J. P. TOONE, HIGH CROSS, RUGBY ; Farmer.**

This is too little from a producer's point of view considering what an animal, when fit for slaughter, has paid indirectly in rates and taxes. The proposed taxes may, and probably will, benefit us to extent of duty proposed, but are not we taxed and rated considerably beyond the proposed duty, and why should not we be fairly dealt with even as far as Colonial produce, and still more so as regards other meat and dairy produce.

W. B. BLUNDELL, THE STOCKING FARM, LEICESTER ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % upon dairy produce, with Colonial produce coming in free, might benefit me 3 % upon my prices. Mr. Chamberlain's suggestions don't go far enough to benefit agriculture, but I regard them as the first step in the right direction.

H. W. BROUGHTON, MARSTON, OXFORD ; Farmer.

I am of opinion that a small duty would in many instances find its way into the landlord's pocket, as much of the land that I know anything about is held under old agreements covenanting to pay more rent than is demanded at the present time. In the event of a duty being imposed, the yearly remissions would probably be either reduced or cease altogether ; on the other hand I believe a substantial duty on all kinds of produce would be shared between the landlord and tenant, the tenant getting the larger share.

A. MURPHY, DRUMLEGAGH P.O., Co. TYRONE ; Farmer.

The duty on meat and dairy produce is too low, but it would benefit little farmers engaged in the same industry as mine.

A. SATCHWELL, CREGGS, Co. ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % is not nearly enough. I would suggest the same tax as the Americans and foreign countries charge us. If this change came it would be of the greatest benefit. For instance, Ireland is purely an agricultural country, lives by it, and is cleaned knocked out of that business by foreign competition of all sorts. The meat producer cannot produce meat and sell it at present prices owing to foreign competition. He cannot possibly pay rent, taxes and other things at present price of foreign meat, and consequently he cannot give a good price for stock to make meat. Therefore he who rears the stock gets a bad price and he cannot give good wages to his labourer, and everyone suffers. But put on a tax, the meat producer gets a good price ; he in turn has to give a good price to the storeman ; while he in turn gives a better wage to his labourers, and everyone is better off in every way and the country more prosperous.

C. FILE, ELHAM, CANTERBURY, KENT ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty would certainly be a slight benefit, but it is not going far enough.

G. ADAMS, ROYAL PRIZE FARM, WADLEY HOUSE, FARINGDON, BERKS. ; Farmer.

It would be better if the proposed duty were a little more, for it does not pay to make beef or bacon or pork at less than 5d. per lb.

C. LAKE, OAKLEIGH, HIGHAM, KENT ; Farmer.

This 5 % duty may do a little good but it is far too low, and not enough to make it worth a farmer's while to grow a larger amount of beef and mutton, &c., which he undoubtedly could do if it paid.

E. PIGG, JUN., FURNEAUX PELHAM, BUNTINGFORD, HERTS. ; Farmer.

The duty would be of great advantage to me as I have been selling on an average over £2,000 worth of fat stock every year. But I have doubt as to whether 5 % is high enough to make prices pay, which they have not been doing the last few years.

FORM No. 12,901. Farmer.

The duty is too small, and the benefit derived would be from steadying the prices of live stock and preventing the great fluctuation so often experienced at present.

J. SCOTT, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

The benefit of a 5 % duty would be a gain to pastoral farmers, but I think it should be higher.

R. CARR, GRINDON, NORHAM-ON-TWEED, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

This, or even a higher tax, is now an absolute necessity. The production of beef at anything less than 7s. 6d. per stone will not pay the British farmer, and unless we can get this, much of the land left in cultivation must follow the heavier wheat soils and go to grass. It has only been the price of beef and mutton which has kept them under the plough, and this year there has been no profit from cattle under 7s. per stone.

G. G. REA, MIDDLETON, WOOLER, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

The duty is too small to be of any appreciable benefit, particularly as so much of our meat supply comes from our Colonies, and is delivered in the home markets more cheaply than home produced meat, owing to the unfair rates charged by the railway companies.

J. FITZGERALD, CARRINDARREY, LISSARDA, CORK ; Farmer.

These duties would benefit me and others engaged in dairying and cattle raising very much. I wish the duty could be increased.

1882

1883

1884

D. LANE, CHARLICOTE, NEAR WARWICK ; Farmer.

This tax, as in the case of wheat, will be too small to give me or any other farmer tangible preference. If for a time it did affect prices, it would encourage the Colonial rather than the English farmer, as the former is in a far better position to produce at low prices than we are.

C. PRATT, CASTLE FARM, ONGAR, ESSEX ; Farmer.

I should think the duty must benefit us although it ought to be more.

THOMAS CHARTRES, WOOLER, NORTHUMBRELAND ; Farmer.

The duty on meat coming from U.S.A. and Argentina, &c., would to a certain extent benefit the English and Scotch feeders, but it is too small to be of much good. All foreign meat should be marked and sold as such.

E. B. TORR, INSTOW, NORTH DEVON ; Farmer.

The duty would benefit us somewhat ; 5 % is not high enough. All foreign stuff should be branded. I am not sure about Colonial produce being let in free. This depends on how they let in our stuff.

E. G. A. COCHRANE, RED CASTLE, NEAR LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

Meadow land is very scarce in this district, therefore butter bears a high price, and no part of the farm is so profitable as the portions allotted to dairy produce. I would be glad to see duty increased.

W. MOTHEEWELL, DERRY, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

The proposal would be of some assistance, but it is not enough.

T. A. McREYNOLDS, KING'S MILLS, STEWARTSTOWN, CO. TYRONE ; Farmer.

These duties would be of immense advantage to the farmers of the U.K., as our markets are flooded with foreign meat and dairy produce, to the great disadvantage of the home producer. The duty, however, should be much higher, and include eggs.

P. McLAUGHLIN, CASTLEMURRAY, DUNKINEELY, CO. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

The duties are bound to benefit me, but a 5 % duty on foreign meat is not high enough. This year I found considerable difficulty in selling even at a very bad price owing to the markets being glutted with foreign meat.

W. S. YATES, LEINSTER LODGE, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

As the fattening of stock is by far the largest branch of my farming, even a small duty like that proposed would benefit me, but why such a ridiculously small duty ? With the poor man getting his bacon duty free, and the artisan plenty of remunerative employment under "protection," it would be only fair play if the Irish farmer got something for his meat.

FORM No. 12,678. Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would be an excellent thing, but the duty should be higher. The local producer pays poor rates, income tax, &c., which the foreign importer does not, therefore the duty should amount to these, so as to bring the foreigner and home producer on a level.

T. WALKER, CLONCANNON, BALLYGAR, ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

5 % is not sufficient as a duty on imported meat. It would probably benefit me in getting a better market for my stock. Even with a duty, the surplus meat of America will come over, and unless a fair duty is put on, it will not benefit us.

R. McFEETER, JUNCTION FARM, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

I would not be benefited to any appreciable extent with 5 %. I would be inclined to increase the amount on dead meat.

T. FROST, SIX MILE BRIDGE, CLARE ; Farmer.

The duty suggested on dairy produce and meat, live and dead, is ruinous to the British farmer. If 10 % be imposed on both, we get some chance. The great increase in cost of living, because of the flow of emigration from our country, has run up wages for farm helps to an enormous degree, and foreign competition then coming in makes our profit nil in dairying, which is the principal cause of dairy farmers resorting to public creameries for the reason that they can dispense with many hands, and these creameries are the ruin of Ireland. We cannot rear good calves on separated milk, no matter what substitutes we employ, and then, as the price got for milk on an average is only a trifle over a 1d. per quart, small rent can be paid on that. Send the foreigner from England ; let him keep his produce at home if he chooses. Put a tariff on him, giving the people of our own country a chance of existing.

E. BYRNE, RATHVILLY, CARLOW ; Farmer.

I would probably gain some benefit from the above duty, but consider it altogether too small to do much. It should be at least 10 %.

F. E. & J. TAYLOR, HERMITAGE, NEWBURY, BERKS. ; Farmers.

The duty is insufficient to benefit us to any extent ; we sell from 40 to 60 fat beasts every year, averaging £18 each. Canada would send more cattle and meat if there were an advantage of say £1 per beast to them compared with the U.S.A.

1889

**Proposed 5 % Duty
on Meat and Dairy
Produce**

**Higher Duty desired
—continued.**

H. GREGG, STILLORGAN, CO. DUBLIN ; Farmer.

The duty on meat and dairy produce should be higher, say 10 %, as it will come all the same, and the price here will not be affected.

P. S. MARSDEN, HOAR CROSS, BURTON-ON-TRENT, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

A substantial duty on meat and dairy produce would induce the British farmer to feed more beasts for the market, and generally assist him to farm in a proper manner.

JAMES KAVANAGH, BALLINGLEN, RATHDRUM, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

A 5 % duty on meat and dairy produce would benefit me considerably as it would help to keep those commodities at a remunerative price, and the meat trade is one of the most important in this country at the present time. The duty is not nearly high enough. Still, anything that would hamper the foreigner cannot fail to benefit the home trade. This tariff would affect almost everyone in Ireland and would revive the pig trade which is the principal industry of the small farmer and the labourer, while a duty on other kinds of meat would help everyone concerned. The dairy business is nearly wiped out in this locality, and the duty would not affect me at all, but then it would benefit those engaged in that branch of agriculture, and by so doing would benefit the country at large.

1890

FORM No. 12,291. Farmer.

The duty should not be less than 10 %. A corn duty of 5 % would be no benefit to me.

W. A. PERSSE, LOUGHREA, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

The proposed duty would be a considerable help, but 10 % would be better.

J. A. PELL, WATER HALL, WIXOE, HALSTEAD, ESSEX ; Farmer.

The duties ought to enable a reduction to be made on the present excessive taxation on land, but 5 % on meat and dairy produce or 2s. per qr. on corn will not help the farmer by raising the prices of the various products he produces, by that amount. The foreign farmers are like ourselves, they must produce something, and when they have produced it, must take the best price they can get, and they must send it here to get that price, as no other country will take it, or only subject to a very high duty.

J. STUART, GARSTANG, LANCS. ; Farmer.

The suggested duty of 5 % on meat and dairy produce would make no material difference to me on my farm. I should prefer a higher duty, say 7½ %.

1891

J. T. WALLER, CASTLETOWN, PALLASKENRY, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

A duty of 5 % not enough with Colonial produce free, but likely to do good.

S. MAY, WOODVILLE, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The best farmers in England, Ireland, and Scotland are those who use at least a certain amount of their produce in cattle feeding. Farming cannot be carried on without cattle feeding, and it is much more important to the farmer, and especially to the Irish farmer, that a fuller duty should be put on cattle than on corn. £1 a head on foreign live cattle would give me 10s. on my beast in Liverpool or Manchester. Even with £1 a head duty on live cattle, the quantity would be very little short of the amount coming in at present.

W. J. BURGESS, STOW, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK ; Auctioneer, Valuer and Land Agent.

5 % is ridiculously low. It ought to be as high on Russian, French, Dutch, &c., imports as their duties on ours. The distance is short and freight low from French and Dutch ports, and they dump fat calves, grass-fed beef, and eggs, in turn. Each of these can be produced very cheaply at certain seasons of the year, but at great cost at any other time. An egg costs me 2d. to produce at Christmas week and about ½d. on Good Friday. When their low season coincides with our high one they have an enormous advantage, which is denied to us.

1892

E. C. D. COLGAN, BALLYHAST HOUSE, CASTLETOWN, GEOGHEGAN, WESTMEATH, IRELAND ; Farmer.

The suggested duty on dairy produce will be of inestimable pecuniary benefit to me. The local fairs and the principal markets in Dublin tell of the great depression in the trade, and it will be impossible to make "ends meet" if restrictions are not speedily placed on foreign meat. Live stock raising here will be more profitable and less speculative than at present. A duty on dairy produce will be a fillip to revive the neglected dairying industry here, and considering the improved methods, our butter and cheese could be made to command the highest market prices. I am very much against Colonial produce being admitted free. Take Canada, no matter how vigilant the authorities are on the border between the States and Canada, money being powerful, the wealthy big firms in the U.S.A. will get their produce to the Canadian ports, and consequently there will be many abuses by the Americans, to evade the duty. The proposed duty on meat is not sufficient.

R. S. CLEMENTS, J.P., BERAGH, TYRONE ; Farmer.

The 5 % as proposed, would not be a great benefit to farmers, as the Colonies would be free. Besides, the cost to the Government, of collecting duties, would be very considerable, for such a small return as the 5 % proposed.

ANDREW PHILLIPS, BALLYKELLY, LIMAVADY, CO. LONDONDEERRY ; Farmer.

The duty is not half enough to be of any benefit to agriculturists, but so long as the supply exceeds the demand it is immaterial what duty is put on.

M. HALLORAN, LISTOWEL, CO. KERRY; Farmer.

I have been engaged in dairy farming, and know a good deal about its vicissitudes for the last 40 years. To farmers nothing has been so disastrous as the fall in the price of butter. I remember the time when it was common to get £5 for a firkin containing 77 lbs., in our local market here in Listowel. I have seen similar weights for a long series of years, varying in price, at different periods of each year, from £2 to £3 a firkin according to quality. This condition of things has undermined a great industry, with disastrous financial results to farmers inhabiting vast areas in the county of Kerry. No doubt the advent of creameries has superseded the old order of things almost completely, and an improvement to a certain extent has been effected, but there are serious drawbacks, such as the mortality in calves caused by separated milk. It is the first duty of the greatest Empire in the world to protect its own producers, to watch with fostering care the first symptom of decay in any of its great industries, and to apply a remedy before the disease takes root, as it has in this unfortunate country. As long as an open door is left to dump in the several ports of the U.K. foreign cattle and butter free of duty, so long will our two great industries decline. I have very grave doubts that the duty suggested on meat and dairy produce will improve the present unfortunate conditions, but the initial stages of great reforms are often slow in accomplishment, and good may come when prejudice ceases to usurp the place of deliberate judgment.

(L3) DUTY ON LIVE AND DEAD MEAT.

Duty on Live and
Dead Meat

189

QUESTION 11. (FORM V.):—*Are you in favour of any distinction being made between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat, and if so, on what grounds?*

40 British and Irish farmers content themselves with a general declaration in favour of a higher duty on dead than on live meat, because of the resulting increase in British employment, or because of the improved quality of the meat when animals are fed a little longer on British pastures. Other replies are as follows:—

Higher Duty on
Dead Meat

W. FRANKISH, CULME, ST. CATHERINE'S, LINCOLN; Farmer.

Certainly a higher duty should be placed on dead meat against live; firstly, much food would be brought to this country, in the off's, of a cheap character for the poorer classes, and next the slaughter of the cattle and sheep would give employment to British workmen. We should also have the hides, &c., in this country for tanning, giving still further employment.

G. P. TERRETT, MEAT INSPECTOR'S OFFICE, CENTRAL MARKET, SMITHFIELD, LONDON, E.C.

That there should be a distinction seems an imperative necessity—1st, the value of a carcass of foreign dressed meat is only about 75 % of the value of imported alive; 2nd, much capital is invested in the waterside slaughtering business, and almost entirely English capital; 3rd, the importation of live cattle brings into existence several minor industries as tanning, soap boiling, &c., whereas dead meat makes no work; 4th, an undue preference is already given to foreign dead meat by railway companies who carry Yankee beef at 25s. per ton from Liverpool into this market, (the carriage of English meat from Birmingham, half the distance, is 40s. per ton), and run express trains to meet the boats which carry the Dutch meat, and in other ways put foreign productions at a premium.

189

G. ADAMS, ROYAL PRIZE FARM, WADLEY HOUSE, FARINGDON, BERKS.; Farmer.

I think the dead meat coming under the head of manufactured articles should pay a duty of 10 %, and live, with pork and bacon, a duty of at least 5 %, for at the present price no farmer or labourer can afford to fat a pig and sell at those prices, viz., from 4d. to 5d. a lb.

T. MOLYNEUX, J.P., THE DECAY, DUNLAVIN, CO. WICKLOW; Farmer.

I would certainly charge a heavier duty on dead meat because the live cattle would give some employment in this country before it could go into consumption, and I would strictly enforce the Infectious Diseases Act and see that the country sending the cattle had a clean bill of health.

FORM No. 12,850. Farmer.

The duty on dead meat should be higher, on the grounds that it lowers the price of fat cows and second quality of fat cattle sent to market by small farmers.

139

H. C. VILLIERS-STUART, CAPPOQUIN, WATERFORD; Farmer.

A higher duty on dead than live meat should be imposed because every animal slaughtered in this country means some form of industry in connection with the hide, horns, offal, tallow, leather, tanning, &c.

E. FOREMAN, SQUERREYES COURT, WESTERHAM, KENT; Bailiff to Lt.-Col. WARDE.

I am in favour of a heavier duty on dead meat, but live beasts free, because a great many of them would make better beef by being fed a little longer, which would be an advantage to home markets.

E. S. L. COLLINS, WELLS, SOMERSET; Farmer.

The heavier duty should be on the dead meat, because when a butcher buys a live animal he can better judge the quality than when dead, besides, if slaughtered in this country, there would be more work for our journeyman butchers, and the offals are also useful in various ways.

J. JONES, DINARTH HALL, COLWYN BAY, DENBIGHSHIRE; Farmer.

Imports of meat in the near future will be almost altogether in chilled carcasses. The cost of transit will be less and dead meat is more easily distributed than live stock. With central depots with refrigerating apparatus, the consumption and sale of meat can be better controlled than with live stock centres. Live

1897 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

Higher Duty on Dead Meat
—continued.

cattle are subject to disease and restrictions, in addition to which the cost of transit is considerably more. A sliding scale should exist to equalize 5 % on the live cattle and on the dead meat, inasmuch as 5 % upon the carcasses is less than 5 % upon the live weight of animals, and some system must be found to equalize the difference between the bare carcass imported and the carcass with the offal existing in the live animal, the offal of the latter being nearly 50 % of the whole.

FORM No. 12,291. Farmer.

There should be no duty on live cattle, but a duty on dead meat of about 50 %.

J. STEVENSON, RAMELTON, Co. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of 10 % on live meat, 15 % on dead meat.

T. FLOOD, NEWHALL, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I am most decidedly in favour of the duty being imposed on the dead meat, as, owing to cheap transit rates, it can be landed in Liverpool cheaper than we can have our cattle carried there owing to the high rates charged on Irish railways.

W. H. MOSSE, BINNETT'S BRIDGE MILLS, KILKENNY ; Farmer and Miller.

If live cattle were allowed in at 5 % duty, dead should bear 10 %, as, being perishable, they must be disposed of at any price and consequently depress cattle and sheep unduly.

W. P. HANLY, THURLES, Co. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

I would put a slightly larger tax on dead meat because of the labour of butchering the live stock at home, also the hides and dressing of same, offal, &c., which provide considerable occupation for our people.

R. M. DOWSE, CARNEW, Co. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

I am certainly in favour of making a distinction between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat. It will give employment to a large number of people in killing the live meat, and in many instances countries that can now send dead meat could not send live meat, in consequence of those countries not being free from disease. I would therefore be in favour of putting double the duty on dead meat that I would put on live.

FORM No. 12,404. Farmer.

I would favour an entire live trade in cattle for the sake of proper inspection, which is only possible at the time a beast is slaughtered, and because it would give us a great deal of raw material in hides, &c. Therefore I would tax dead meat more heavily than live animals, the slaughtering and handling of which for a year at, say, 1,000,000 cattle at 7s. 6d. a head, would be £375,000 sterling for labour.

1899

T. H. VERGETTE, BOBO' FEN, PETERBORO', NORTHANTS ; Farmer.

Dead meat ought to be charged 5 % more, because the carriage and expenses are less than live meat, besides they can ship 5,000 carcasses while 500 beasts alive would be an extreme load, and there is more risk from cargo of live beasts shifting and greater danger in a storm. Also the chance of disease breaking out. Dead meat can also be conveyed at half the expense, besides it costs the highways more to carry dead meat in carriages on our roads at the expense of extra rates on the land, which is against landlord and tenant or the owners of the land.

M. MURPHY, CLOYNE, CORK ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of putting a larger tax on dead meat, as I consider it less value as food. In fact I would go so far as to prohibit dead meat from being imported, as I consider it is next to worthless as food and dangerous to health.

J. HUGHES, KILMANAH, THOMASTOWN, Co. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a larger duty on all dead meat coming to this country, as by allowing it to come in free you are destroying one of the greatest industries we have in Ireland.

W. HENDERSON, COUPAR ANGUS, PERTHSHIRE ; Farmer.

I would tax dead meat much more heavily. Proper inspection can only be made at the time an animal is slaughtered with its entrails present. By getting the meat in pieces we may get parts apparently sound off an unsound animal.

We import at present about, per annum, live cattle	..	..	500,000
Fresh dead beef about 4,000,000 cwts. ;=live cattle	..	..	600,000
Total in live cattle	..	..	<u>1,100,000</u>

The hides and offal would be worth, say, £3 sterling a head = £3,300,000, and there is no raw material that would give more employment or circulate more money. The wages paid for slaughtering alone at 3s. to 5s. a head, say at 3s., would come to £165,000. Value of offal and labour in live cattle trade £3,465,000.

FORM No. 12,714. Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty being put on dead meat on the following grounds : That it is much easier to detect the deficiency of quality in the live animal, more particularly in the lower grades. A very inferior article, even carcasses diseased and unfit for human food, carefully dressed and frozen, can be passed and dumped on our markets and sold at prices very injurious to the trade.

1900

1901

I. O'DONNELL, DRUMROOSKE, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

There should be most duty on dead meat ; cattle slaughtered in our large towns would give employment, and there would be some offal to come cheap to the poor.

H. A. WHITTOME, EASTGATE, WHITTLESEA, PETERBORO', CAMBS. ; Farmer.

Certainly there ought to be a much heavier duty on dead meat, as when it comes alive it would benefit labour, also the tanneries and leather industry.

A. B. CHIBNALL, BIDDENHAM, BEDFORD ; Farmer.

The duty should be double on dead meat.

H. DAMPNEY, CLOSOWORTH (SOMERSET), SHERBORNE (DORSET) ; Farmer.

I think dead meat should pay the heaviest tax, as most of the people are employed out of England (although I suppose the actual killing would not employ many).

A. MCCRADKEN, BALLYMAGOLAND, DERRY ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of imposing a heavier duty on dead meat, as the foreigner can send the dead meat at a much less cost in comparison to the live stock.

1902

J. COULTHARD, FAUGH BEECHES, HEADS NOOK, CARLISLE, CUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

I am in favour of more duty being charged on dead meat than on live stock. My reasons are, that British labour would be employed to kill and dress the meat and we would be paying the wages to our own people in place of paying the wages of the foreigner, and we would have all the offal in this country, and unsoundness would be more easily detected.

E. P. LEACOCK, BEWDLEY, WORCS. ; Farmer.

A distinction might be made on the importation of live cattle provided it was brought on British ships and slaughtered in this country, as this would provide employment for labour. Dead meat, on the other hand does not in transit require the employment of as much labour, and it is also, I believe, brought from Liverpool and other ports of debarkation by our own railway companies at rates of freight which absolutely prohibit competition from our own meat producers.

J. M. HARRIS, CHILVESTER LODGE, CALNE, WILTS ; Bacon Curer.

Live meat should pay half duty of dead. The former would give occupation in killing and preparing for market to large numbers of people in town and country. Also the offals which are eaten by poor people form a very cheap food, but are kept in the country of origin if killed abroad. The animals can also be inspected, and, if necessary, condemned. If sent over dead or in a manufactured state detection is very difficult or almost impossible.

1903

L. F. WALKER, PARK HOUSE, MICHAELSTONE-Y-FEDW, MONMOUTHSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty on live store stock should be a less one *pro rata* than on dead meat, because the farmer or breeder in this country will get the benefit of the difference in price between the store and the fat beasts, and a semi-manufactured imported article is better for the country at large than a wholly manufactured or finished article.

W. KILBY, NOTTON, BARNSLEY, YORKS. ; Land and Tenant Right Valuer.

An extra duty should be put on dead meat as I think live meat is much more nutritious and wholesome, in addition to there being a gain in offals in this country.

W. D. KNIGHT, RAPKYNS, HORSHAM, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

I think the duty on dead meat should be greater than on live, because imported cattle require more labour spent on them in this country, and we might get the benefit of the offal from animals killed here. The treatment of hides, skins, fat, &c., employs a large number of persons. The importation of such large and increasing quantities of dead meat is distinctly injurious in this way.

1904

W. H. BARTON, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

The dead meat should bear the highest duty. A lower should be charged on finished live cattle, owing to the advantage it would be to have the hides, horns, hoofs and offal to be made use of in this country, and store cattle should be admitted on a still lower duty as they give home farmers an opportunity of making a profit.

FORM No. 12,213. Farmer.

I would place a much higher duty on the dead meat as that can be sent much cheaper than the live, and I believe it is the chilled meat that makes the price so bad for what we have to sell, as it prevents the butcher making anything of his offal, which otherwise he would sell, thereby enhancing the price of the animal to be disposed of.

J. E. SCOTSON, GATEACRE, NEAR LIVERPOOL ; Farmer.

I should like to see a higher duty on dead meat than live. I think killing it here would give employment to more men in this country ; also we should have all offal for manure. I understand hides from U.S.A. cattle killed at Birkenhead are sent back to U.S.A. to be manufactured into leather goods, probably to be returned here again in boots, &c.

1905 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

W. H. WEST, SOMERSET HOUSE, HOLBEACH MARSH, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

Yes, I would have the duty greater on dead meat on account of the absence of offals, which the English feeder has practically to lose.

Higher Duty on Dead Meat
—continued.

J. COATES, RATHDRUM, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

I am in favour of taxing the dead meat because the facility for importation is much greater than that for live cattle. I would strongly urge a substantial tax on both live and dead meat, but preferably on the latter for the reason assigned. Store cattle ought not to be heavily taxed, as what really ought to pay us is the feeding of cattle. We want the store cattle more particularly for this purpose, and though it would mean that the rearer of young cattle would get an impetus, it is not probable that they could supply our home wants if a good margin of profit could be had on the fattening process.

E. HAYDEN, CASTLEREA LODGE, MAGENY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I think the largest duty should be on dead meat, as of course the killing and lairing will give labour to Irish and British hands, as well as having the offal of the animals, at all events, at first cost.

J. HATRICK, CREGGAN, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

Heavy shipments of dead meat glut the home market, which naturally renders home production unremunerative, besides the quality is inferior ; same may be said of live meat, but it is less liable to be faulty in quality.

J. T. SHAW, GORDONBUSH, BRORA, SUTHERLANDSHIRE ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty being imposed on dead meat, as I consider there is less expense in preparing and circulating it among consumers than in importing the live animal, feeding it on the voyage and preparing it for the consumer on arrival in this country, where labour is more expensive.

W. HIPWELL, SHARNBROOK, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty on dead meat should be the heaviest inasmuch as it is desirable to have the raw hides brought with the meat ; the offal is also useful, part of it for human consumption and part for other purposes. A dressed carcass is to some extent a manufactured article, therefore the importation of live animals is preferable.

J. B. A. BOSANQUET, LAHARDAN HOUSE, PORTLAW, Co. WATERFORD ; Farmer.

Cattle should if possible receive the last month's finish near the market where the meat is to be consumed, as the meat would be better and more wholesome, and less loss entailed for damaged meat by knocking about in transit just before slaughter. English and Scotch buyers calculate from 30s. to 40s. off our Irish fat cattle, which is not calculated off our stores. I think districts distant from great towns, where produce can be raised cheaply, should make cattle almost fat, but finishing touches should be given near the market of consumption.

J. HEALY, MANUS, CLARE CASTLE, Co. CLARE ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a big duty on dead meat ; by a big duty you will get a good sound class of meat and to a great extent do away with bad stuff. It would also give employment to English butchers to kill live stock, which gives us the hides and so employment to tanners, making leather cheap.

MAJOR E. W. GUINNESS, TIBRADDEN, RATHFARNHAM, Co. DUBLIN ; Farmer.

Dead meat should be more heavily taxed than live beasts, because it is a finished article and affords no employment to butchers, &c. Dead meat is, I should think, more easily imported than live animals, consequently better for the shipping trade.

E. BYRNE, RATHVILLY, CARLOW ; Farmer.

There should be a larger amount placed on all dead meats imported, as I believe there is a great deal of foreign meat imported in a dead state which if sent alive would not find such a good market, that is, from the point of quality.

F. R. JACKSON, KILKEA HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, Co. KILDARE ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty being placed on dead meat, as it costs the foreigner very little to carry a dead carcass across to us in frozen condition as against the freight on a live beast, hence there is a bigger difference between the foreign price of meat (dead) and the price we can afford to sell ours at, than there is between our live beasts and theirs.

J. A. PELL, WATER HALL, WIXOE, HALSTEAD, ESSEX ; Farmer.

I would certainly raise the duty on dead meat over stock sent alive. One of my reasons is that it can be sent so much cheaper dead than alive. Another reason is that when killed abroad it escapes all inspection which our meat is subject to in this country. This is virtually giving the foreigner a good bounty to send us all his inferior stuff, and has the effect of reducing the prices of both the foreign live cattle and our own stock, which all are carefully inspected. Another reason is by restricting the foreign live stock to certain ports and lairages ; they are under good inspection and find employment for our own people looking after them, &c., and also consume a certain amount of our produce, hay, &c.

E. C. D. COLGAN, BALLYHAST HOUSE, CASTLETOWN, GEOGHEGAN, WESTMEATH ; Farmer.

Extra duty should be placed on dead meat ; in the first place, the money expended on employment in dressing and cutting up of the meat is lost to us. The offal could be profitably used here, and to attain that

1906

1907

1908

1909

end plenty of employment would be given, and lastly the dead meat being sold in nearly every place, we have fierce competition against us, cutting down our prices to the lowest point and killing our trade.

C. HOPE, DELVIN, WESTMEATH ; Farmer.

I am in favour of more duty on dead meat, which can be carried much cheaper than live animals, and its import encourages dumping in order to get away surpluses.

M. O'KEEFE, R.D.C., HYRATH, CALLAN, KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I am in favour of duty on dead meat, as the offal of live animals would be a great addition to the artificial manure of which farmers are using 4 times as much now as a few years ago.

A. O'CONNOR, CELBRIDGE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I would impose heavier duty on dead meat than live, as the frozen meat in many cases is sold as the genuine article, much to the detriment of the home feeder.

E. WILLIAMS, LANUSK, USK, MONMOUTH ; Farmer.

The duty should be higher on dead meat, which can be more cheaply imported than live and thus sold at a low price to the injury of the home produce. What is known as the fifth quarter will provide cheap food for the poor and the skins will be available for the production of leather.

1910

J. P. POE, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty on dead than live meat, as I think it would steady the market, and farmers would not suddenly find the country glutted with dead meat, when their beef was ready for sale. A great deal of poultry is produced near here, almost all of which is sent to England. Many of the small farmers and labourers fatten turkeys for the Christmas markets, and have most of their capital sunk in this. A few years ago a cargo of dead turkeys was unexpectedly sent from Canada, which knocked the bottom out of the market and caused a very serious loss to those who could least afford it. The same applies in a lesser way to dead meat.

J. CLARKE, STRABANE, CO. DONEGAL.

Dead meat is the most injurious to home trade as it can be kept in the frozen condition in which it arrives, and therefore can be placed upon the market at any time. In no case should live cattle be allowed to be sent through the country.

P. S. BARRINGTON, BALLYMAN, BRAY, CO. DUBLIN ; Farmer.

If a duty be put on let it be on dead meat, because when live cattle come we have the offal, which affords work for our people, as the skins, bones and fat can be worked up into leather, manure and soap.

1911

J. HONE WILLAN, MULHUDDART, CO. DUBLIN ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of a somewhat higher duty on dead meat as the live meat would have a tendency to give more employment in the manipulation of carcasses, hides, &c. ; also it would be easier to discern the genuine article. This is of course inferring that the greatest vigilance be observed to prevent the importation of any disease.

E. WILSON, J.P., RATHMORE PARK, TULLOW, CARLOW ; Farmer.

I would put a higher tariff on dead meat as no hides, horns or offal come with it. So its effect is to do away with the tanning and other industries, and it only keeps up the shopman who sells it.

FORM No. 12,123. Farmer.

The duty on dead meat should be relatively higher because important industries, employing many hands, are affected—I allude to the various processes in leather dressing, the manufacture of articles made of horn, e.g., knife handles, buttons, &c.

D. A. SPENCE, DUNNINALD MAINS, MONTROSE, FORFARSHIRE.

I am in favour of healthy store animals being admitted free, and no other live animals except for breeding purposes ; a duty being imposed on all dead meat. I am satisfied this would mean a great gain to the feeding districts, but of course it may be a selfish view.

1912

EDWARD BERRY TORR, INSTOW, N. DEVON ; Farmer.

Bring it all dead, brand it, and put a duty on it.

J. F. GREEN, J.P., GREENMOUNT, PATRICK'S WELL, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

I have no doubt that the dead meat is of better quality than the live meat would be, owing to the deterioration of the cattle from the voyage, and also the facilities now made use of for preserving it, in not allowing it to be frozen, but keeping it just a couple of degrees or so above freezing point. I imagine dead meat is more inimical to our home trade and perhaps should be more heavily taxed.

F. H. S. O'BRIEN, CRATLOE WOODS, CRATLOE, CLARE ; Farmer.

I am decidedly in favour of imposing a higher duty on dead meat than live. My reasons are that the freight on live cattle and sheep is much higher than on carcasses, thus operating for the benefit of the shipping trade. The insurance would naturally be much higher for live animals owing to risk of losses, and our markets would also get the benefit of the hides, offal and horns of the animals imported.

1913

Duty on Live and Dead Meat**Higher Duty on Dead Meat**
—continued.**S. J. COE, WALCOT PARK, STAMFORD ; Farmer.**

Dead meat should be taxed for various reasons, viz., the carcass might be diseased, whereas if live the offals would find employment for a number of people and we should be better able to detect disease.

W. S. YATES, LEINSTER LODGE, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

Certainly impose nearly all the duty on dead meat as the larger and cheaper quantity comes so. We cannot possibly compete with quotations at 2½d. Again dead meat is like the manufactured article which does away with employment at home.

W. FLEMING, AUGHANSILLACH, LIMAVADY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

The dead meat market rules the living and dead both at home and abroad. The living are fairly taxed by freight, and when they come here we can buy them for what they are worth and finish them out for beef. If they can be sent here cheaper than we can rear them it will be a saving, as keeping a cow to rear a calf is an expensive business, and she pays for nothing else now. Dead meat is shipped cheaper than we can convey our cattle from one market to another in the same county, and foreigners have an advantage of us in this item alone. My opinion is, duty on dead meat.

1914

T. H. SCOTT, GROVE HOUSE, FILEY, E. YORKS. ; Manager of Landed Property.

Undoubtedly live meat should pay less tax than dead meat on the ground that live meat may be bought as store stock and improved in quality by feeding for a short time, and moreover all the offal of the dead meat is lost to the butcher and the country in general.

G. SMYTH, QUICKSWOOD, BALDOCK, HERTFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

The preference should be given to live meat if any, as anything in shape of disease can better be detected in the live animal than in the carcass.

G. H. ACTON, BRIDGEMOUNT, CASTLEBAR, CO. MAYO ; Farmer.

If live meat means finished animals for slaughter at port of debarkation I would be inclined to have somewhat lighter tax, we should have the killing, the hides, hoofs, blood, all tending to promote various industries.

A. PARKHILL, CULLION, CO. LONDONDERRY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

A slightly higher duty ought to be placed on dead meat than on live cattle. Dead meat is brought over more cheaply and causes a more irregular price in cattle. Dead meat must be sold at once while live cattle may be held over for a few days if the supply is greater than the demand.

1915

P. R. GRAY, ATHY, CO. KILDARE ; Farmer.

I think that live beasts ought to be looked upon as the raw material and be allowed into this country free of duty—not prohibited as at present—that dead meat representing the manufactured article should be taxed. Fancy in an inland town like Athy, foreign meat being sold from 4d. to 6d. per lb. I presume it is carried here from Liverpool at a preferential rate after being allowed to leave free of duty. How can agriculture expect to exist under such circumstances ?

J. HARRISON, MILL HOUSE FARM, HALSALL, NEAR ORMSKIRK, LANCs. ; Farmer.

I shall always advocate the shipment of live cattle into this country in preference to dead meat.

W. REID, 160, CENTRAL MEAT MARKET, LONDON, E.C. ; Wholesale Cattle and Meat Salesman.

The live stock imported should pay even a smaller duty, as they are virtually the raw material, and not only bring work to thousands of people, but also fresh offals, which is an important factor in feeding the poorer classes. I would suggest a nominal duty of 1s. per head on fat cattle, and 1d. per head on calves, sheep and swine. The principal supplies of live and dead meat are at present imported from the U.S.A., Argentine and Holland, and I consider we are so much dependent on them for food that it would be dangerous to impose anything like a 5 % duty.

1916

A. W. MERRY, F.S.I., LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Land Agent, Surveyor and Auctioneer.

I do not see much ground for distinction, though in the case of live meat you are taxing hides and some offals which may be termed raw materials.

FORM No. 12,068. Farmer.

I would give the preference to the live meat ; we then get the offals, and generally know more what we are eating.

H. D'ESTERRE, J.P., MELTON MOWBRAY ; Farmer.

Live meat appears a more valuable import than frozen meat, as it gives a certain amount of employment to labour and appears less easily cornered and thus lends itself less to the will of the U.S.A. trade, which in late years has been all powerful in ruling our markets.

J. SPICER, WOOL, DORSET ; Farmer.

A little favour ought to be given to live meat as the inspectors at the port of debarkation can tell if it is fit for human food, but they cannot tell by seeing the dead meat without seeing under what circumstances or the surroundings where the meat is killed and packed.

1917

C. E. BARRITT, MALDON, ESSEX ; Farmer.

I should favour the importation of live meat and to do so should put 10 % duty on dead and 5 % on live meat. The meat coming alive would find more work here, also we should have the by-products which are of considerable value.

J. WILLIS, NUFFIELD, HENLEY-ON-THAMES, OXON ; Farmer.

A distinction should be made in favour of live meat, subject to proper investigation on landing as to health and quality, on account of employing English labour.

W. COGGAN, 58, THURLOW PARK ROAD, DULWICH, S.E. ; Retailer of Meat.

I am in favour of allowing American live cattle and sheep in free, as at present, as they create employment for a large staff of workmen, and may be practically considered raw material.

J. JEFFERSON, PEEL HALL, CHESTER ; Farmer.

Yes, I am in favour of live stock being admitted free for slaughter only, and a duty on dead meat, then this would make more employment for British labour and make leather cheaper.

J. HUTCHEON, LOWER COLLEWISS, TURRIFF, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of all cattle being killed on arrival, and would have a higher ratio of taxation on dead than on living animals, for the precise reason that the slaughtering of cattle would give increased work, and their offal could be utilised with considerable benefit to the nation.

1918

D. COOK, DUNSTABLE, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Yeoman.

I should be in favour of a heavier duty being put on foreign dead meat, and live should be killed at the docks to prevent any contagion. Foreign meat should be labelled and sold as such. English and foreign meat ought not to be sold in the same shop, and care should be taken as to what quantities of preservatives are used in foreign dairy produce and meat as it is very dangerous if used in large quantities. There is another matter of importance which should be brought to the notice of the Tariff Commissioners. That is, with regard to foreign hay and straw. Diseases of various kinds have been traced and poisonous insects are often seen in the mangers where it has been used. On account of peat-moss being used for litter and wood pulp for paper manufacturing, straw of late remains at a ruinous price. Why not first put a stiff duty on foreign hay, straw, peat-moss and wood pulp ? That would not be taxing the people's food, which some classes make so much fuss about, and it would likewise benefit the agriculturist and grazier. It would also help bring in revenue to our country at the expense of the foreigner.

FORM No. 12,265. Farmer.

The duty should be higher on dead meat than on live—if animals come alive it will help to employ more here to slaughter them ; we should also have the offal, and the beasts can be properly inspected before they are killed.

1919

DAVID ROSE, WELLESLEY HOUSE, HANDSWORTH.

Live cattle should be admitted free and slaughtered at ports of debarkation, giving employment in our own country, and profit arising from working up the residuals. 5 % on dead meat would not be felt by the consumer.

J. C. MCKAY, PALLAS HOUSE, BEAUFORT, KERRY ; Farmer.

If the cattle were to be slaughtered at the port of debarkation I would be for putting more duty on the dead meat, as the offal would be of great value, especially the hides ; the leather could be manufactured in this country and a good many hands employed in slaughtering and the other necessary work, whereas by having them killed on the other side those benefits are lost. On the other hand, if the cattle are not slaughtered on arrival, but put on grass to fatten, I would be for putting a great deal higher duty on them than on the dead meat.

R. WALSH, BALLYMACK, CUFFES GRANGE, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of putting 3 times the duties on dead meat, on the grounds of giving employment in our own country. If they were paid at home to kill this meat, the country would profit well by it ; paying men in another country to do what you could do yourself is working backwards.

1920

On the other hand, 71 British and Irish farmers say generally that they favour a higher duty on live than on dead meat, chiefly on the ground that imported live stock would come most into competition with the home producer, while imported live meat is less distinguishable from entirely home-fed meat than is imported dead meat. Other replies are as under :—

Higher Duty on
Live Meat

MAJOR-GENL. F. E. SOTHEBY, ECTON, NORTHAMPTON ; Farmer.

I am in favour of higher duty on live stock. It competes against us in our own markets as it comes in very nearly as good a condition as our own. Dead meat does not affect us much.

A. B. LEITCH, ALVES, FORRES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty being put on live cattle or sheep coming to this country for slaughter, because they are often killed and substituted for home-fed cattle. If we are not to get the benefit of stores let us have a dead meat trade, but I should prefer that our ports should be opened to all countries that are free of disease.

1921 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

Higher Duty on Live Meat
—continued.

JAMES CAHILL, BALLINGARRY, Co. TIPPERARY ; Farmer

I consider that there should be more duty put on the live meat, for the very good reason that the live meat would affect the beef trade of this country more than the dead. At least that was the reason given by cattle dealers during the past summer for the low price of beef, they attributed it to the ending over of the beef alive, when the dispute arose amongst the meat packers. Of course it stands to reason that it should be so, and naturally most people would like to know that the meat they were getting was fresh killed.

J. C. SMITH, MONASTERORIS, EDENDERRY ; Farmer.

The import of dead meat gives little or no employment, and is like the manufactured article, which would be a reason for heavier duty. Still the live cattle seem almost more dangerous to our trade.

J. McARTHUR, CARNAMADDY, BURT, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

A duty on live meat would enable us to fatten out our young cattle at a profit, a thing we find scarcely possible to do under existing circumstances.

W. A. COOPER, COOPER'S HILL, CARLOW ; Farmer.

I would like to see a much heavier duty on live than dead meat. It would serve us in the grazing business far more. The dead meat trade is necessary to the artisan. Our fat beasts are spoiled before they reach the London market by the hardships of the journey and the savagery of our Irish drovers who spoil the best parts by beating the beasts on the back. In addition there is starvation and thirst. It is more to the advantage of England and Ireland that we should send over the beasts as forward stores, and that they should be finished in England and Scotland when they will bring the very highest price as prime beef.

TEADY McERLEAN, CLADY, PORTGLENONE ; Tea, Wine, Flour, &c., Merchant.

I am in favour of a greater duty on live meat because dead meat cannot compete with fresh-killed meat ; besides the importation of live would injure the Irish store cattle trade which is the principal trade of Ireland.

W. H. DONAGHY, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM, IRELAND ; Farmer.

Free import of live Colonial cattle would injure our cattle trade here by lowering the price and as a consequence lessening the profit on home reared stock. Substantial portions of the profit of my farm are due to cattle trade.

JOHN FITZGERALD, CARRIGDARRERY, LISSARDS, CORK ; Farmer.

I am in favour of taxing live meat more than dead. We in Ireland find it very hard to dispose of our store and fat cattle at anything like remunerative prices. We will be utterly ruined if something is not done to prevent our markets being flooded with foreign fat and store cattle and sheep.

FORM No. 12,500. Farmer.

I should favour a higher tariff being imposed on live meat, as our markets most palpably fluctuate in accordance with foreign arrivals of live meat.

JOHN GIBSON, OMAGH, TYRONE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of a heavier duty on live meat as I think a lot of it is sold for what it isn't, viz., Scotch or English. I think there should be a duty put on American bacon. Ireland is a pig growing country and if it would pay to raise them we could supply any quantity.

C. J. RYAN, NEW INN, CAHIR, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

Certainly there should be a great distinction. If the restrictions were taken off live cattle imported into England it would simply be the death-blow to this country, our staple industry would be destroyed, and what to turn to I fail to see. It may not interfere so much with the English farmer, but with the Irish certainly. As to the duty on dead meat I fancy it would help in an indirect way. I grant some may suffer and some that can least afford to. Still it would be only a trifle and it means a lot to others.

JAMES CLARKE, LISDIVIN, STRABANE, Co. TYRONE ; Farmer.

I cannot make much distinction between live and dead meat, but if live store cattle are admitted, I consider it would mean ruin for about three-quarters of the ordinary Irish farmers, as cattle rearing has become one of the chief means of living for the medium, but especially the small farmers.

HERBERT KING, BROOM, BIGGLESWADE ; Farmer.

Yes, tax live meat very heavily and discourage the coming in at all, because I believe much of it now is afterwards sold as British-fed—bad quality thus damaging the character of the real article, and people disappointed with what they believe to be British simply go in for the lowest priced or foreign.

R. G. ADAMSON, J.P., ATHBOY, Co. MEATH ; Farmer.

I would be more in favour of taxing the live meat, as the live meat does more harm to Ireland, and would not affect the poorer class. There are just as good fat cattle coming from America as we can produce here, better in one way, as the butchers tell me it is hardly ever bruised as ours very often is.

JOHN WILLIAMS, TULLOW LODGE, THOMASTOWN, Co. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a much more substantial duty being put on live cattle as they clash more with our good cattle ; they travel better than our cattle and lose very little in placing on the English market. They are accustomed to corn, so that they are feeding and fattening on their trip across, while our cattle are treated

1922

1923

1924

very roughly and offered in market two days after quitting our shores with their sides stuck together, so that it the grazier were to meet them in the English market he would not know his own cattle. I can plainly see our meat market is doomed, just as our wheat growing has been. Look at the prices Buenos Ayres and other countries are giving for our very best cattle—£1,200 to £2,000 for bulls, rams similar, heifers and cows also.

G. MILNE, DRUMLITHIE, KINCARDINE; Farmer.

I would favour the imposition of a bigger duty on live than dead meat. My reason for this is that live meat is often sold in London and elsewhere as prime Scotch to the detriment of the Scottish farmer.

JOSEPH BEECROFT, BANKFIELDS, EASTHAM, NEAR BIRKENHEAD, CHESHIRE; Farmer.

I think it would be more on live cattle for they come more in touch with our own on our own market, and are very often sold as English, which is detrimental to our trade.

F. R. DANIELL, OAKHAM, RUTLAND; Farmer.

The best live cattle are better than our average, and greatly displace our best beasts at hotels and large establishments, and 10 % on this might benefit the grazier and not injure the consumer. I object to the duty on tea as wholly paid by the consumer, and the poorer the man the more he pays according to his income—8d. is nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ on 1s. 6d. tea, but only $\frac{1}{4}$ on 2s. 8d. Tax *ad valorem* and only competing articles, and then only part is paid by consumer and home industry promoted.

JAMES KAVANAGH, BALLINGLEN, RATHDRUM, CO. WICKLOW; Farmer.

As this is the most important industry in this country, and as the live and dead meat trades are so closely united, it would not be easy to separate them with any advantage. If live meat be allowed in free, the market would be glutted with it, as is often the case at the present time; on the other hand, if dead meat be allowed in free, it will have the same effect on the markets, and the tariff will have no effect whatever. As this is a cattle-rearing country, and as it is the only industry left us by free trade, anything that would help to foster it would be hailed with joy, for if any failure comes on the live stock trade, farming in this country becomes impossible.

FORM No. 12,220. Farmer.

Let all dead meat come in free of duty, but tax all live, either beasts or sheep, and have them slaughtered on landing, and marked in butchers' shops as "foreign-fed meat." By doing this the U.S.A. and other beasts (sent over alive, killed for instance at Deptford and other depots, which are passed off to the public as "home-killed beef") will not compete with the home-fed meat.

M. G. E. HAYDEN, CARRICK-ON-SUIR, CO. TIPPERARY; Farmer.

I would suggest that there should not be so much put on dead meat, but that it be well watched, as in a great many cases of frozen carcasses they are "dead," but not "killed." At the same time, with all that would come from the Colonies, England would have enough.

MICHAEL O'DONOGHUE, CLARE CASTLE, CO. CLARE; Farmer.

I do consider there should be a distinction made between live and dead meat. Dead meat, generally speaking, is the food of the poor, whereas the live is the food of the well-to-do people.

PATRICK DOHENY, CALLAN, CO. KILKENNY; Farmer.

I am in favour of a distinction being made between the duties on live stock and dead meat, because if a duty be not imposed on live stock, the stall feeders only would be benefited, but the great mass of the small and middle-class farmers would be ruined, for the price which they receive for their milk just enables them to keep the house going, to meet family expenses, whereas the money which they receive for their young stock makes up the rent and taxes.

J. MARR, UPPER MILLS, TARVES, ABERDEENSHIRE; Farmer.

I would favour a higher duty on live meat, because such meat is usually sold as "home" or "town killed," and being thus systematically marketed, it has lowered the reputation of the genuine "home" article. I would also favour a higher duty on live meat because it would hit the U.S.A. exporter hardest, and he is the one who most needs to be brought to his senses.

A. H. KINGSLEY, BOURNE ORCHARD, HERTFORD, HERTS.; Farmer.

The best market in the neighbourhood is Waltham Cross, 7 miles away. I have frequently sent stock there, to find the price from the previous week has so seriously decreased owing to there being large shipments of foreign cattle to offer that I have brought them home again.

D. SHEPPEARD, KELSO, ROXBURGH; Farmer.

I object to live foreign meat competing with home without paying the due proportion of taxation.

T. WARD, CARRINGTON GRANGE, BOSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE; Farmer.

I would impose the smaller duty on dead meat; this comes less into competition with our home-fed meat, and cannot so well be offered for sale as British, a very common practice, and one which should receive immediate attention.

H. T. HINCKES, WIGSTON HALL, LEICESTER; Farmer and Auctioneer.

The cattle that come over alive compete with English-fed meat more than those coming dead. The bulk of the former is sold as English.

1929

Duty on Live and Dead Meat**Higher Duty on Live Meat**
—continued.

ARTHUR H. CARTER, HOLLY HOUSE, MAGDALEN, KING'S LYNN ; Farmer.

I would tax the manufactured article. Let all hides be tanned here, and all offals used for the benefit of the farmer, in the way of blood, bone and refuse.

G. F. ARMYTAGE, HOO LODGE, HOO, ROCHESTER ; Farmer.

Dead meat is preferable, and the duty should be in its favour.

ROBT. SHIRRA GIBB, LAUDER, N.B. ; Farmer.

The meat trade should be entirely a dead one.

ALEX. MACINTYRE, ROTHESAY, ISLE OF BUTE ; Farmer.

A higher tariff on live meat would be of advantage to home feeders. The best class of consumers have no liking for dead meat.

PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, CASTLEMURRAY, DUNKINEELY, CO. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I consider there should be a much higher duty on live meat. Dead meat is principally used by working classes, while the live meat is used by persons who could afford to give a fair price for home meat.

GILBERT DAVIDSON, BARNHILLS, MINTO, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

I would favour a larger duty on live meat, as foreign dead meat is more likely to be bought here for what it is. With regard to fattening sheep and cattle, store or lean cattle are always too dear from the feeder's point of view but not from the breeder's. What is wanted to put this right is a considerably higher price for the beef farmers' produce.

JOHN SPEIR, NEWTON, GLASGOW ; Farmer.

The duty on live meat should be several times greater than that for dead meat. The difference in food value is trifling, but retailers of foreign meat imported alive desire it to be continued, because they are able to sell it as home produce, which is not so easily done with dead meat. At present scarcely any attempt is made to prevent or restrict this fraud, and a high import duty on live animals for meat might check it.

SAMUEL MAY, WOODVILLE, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

At present, at all events, there should be a great distinction made between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat, because while the higher and middle classes do not go in for dead meat as a rule, the lower classes do, and it is those cattle which are killed after arrival that do the most harm, and they are, I know, often sold for home-grown meat.

1931

JOHN WHALEY, ANNSBORO', ROBERTSTOWN, NAAS, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I would impose a heavier tariff on live meat as the offal of the animal tends to reduce the carcase price as low as, if not lower than the dead meat can be bought for.

S. J. LEESON, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of a higher duty on live meat ; it is only by producing better meat than the foreigner we can hope to keep in the markets, and I should think live meat would be our keenest rival.

G. L. BOMFORD, OAKLEY PARK, KELLS, CO. MEATH ; Farmer.

Would put a higher duty on live meat ; dead meat is largely the food of the poor man, who but for it would rarely, if ever, get meat at all. Home-grown beef would compete against live meat in the better markets, and over and above this, I am convinced that any tax on produce must be of advantage for almost everyone in Ireland, and it seems to me that a heavy tax on dead meat would be most difficult to carry politically in England and would raise the most strenuous opposition.

J. GLYNN, DUNMORE, GALWAY ; Farmer.

My opinion is there should be £1 10s. per head on cattle alive, and 10 % on dead meat.

1932

J. KYDD, CARNOUSTIE, FORFAR ; Farmer.

Preference would be given to a higher duty on live meat, because it is this meat imported alive which is the most serious competitor with " Best Scotch " beef, the dead meat competing now with secondary or cheaper qualities. A duty on corn and on cattle would certainly help to some extent and would assist in keeping the land under continuous cultivation, thus giving more and more regular employment to workpeople on the farms.

FORM No. 12,101 ; Farmer.

If live meat is not prohibited, I should put 5 % on Colonial live meat and 10 % on live meat from other countries.

JAMES T. BUTLER, PRIESTOWN, CO. MEATH ; Farmer.

I should be in favour of a heavier duty on live meat. Dead meat does not come into such direct competition with our cattle, it also is largely used by the poorer classes, and it would be important if the price of their food was raised. The live cattle imported are of excellent quality and come into direct competition with our best beef, and I am afraid our cattle do not always get the best of the competition. A heavier tax on live beef would therefore be of benefit to cattle feeders.

1933

R. J. ROBINSON, EDENDERRY, KING'S CO. ; Farmer.

I am of opinion if there was a duty put on cattle coming from foreign countries it would encourage the Irish farmer to rear more stock, therefore till more of his land for the feeding of them and give more employment. Ireland is in my opinion more a grazing country now as the climate does not suit tillage, but a good deal could be done in that way towards the growing of crops for the rearing of young stock.

A. O. T. BENNETT, GATELY HALL, E. DEREHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

If duties are to be imposed on meat at all, then I should be in favour of a heavier duty on live meat; the animals must suffer in transport and cannot be so fit for human food; besides it gives a loop-hole for unscrupulous butchers to describe the meat as English, as it was killed in England. In any case imported animals killed in England ought to be branded the same as imported meat.

W. A. HAMILTON, J.P. (High Sheriff of Co. Donegal), BRIDGETOWN, Co. DONEGAL ; Farmer.

As a landowner I should strongly prefer live meat to be more heavily taxed, as dead meat imported has not the same fresh juicy flavour of home-killed.

THOMAS M. BARKER, COOLBOY HOUSE, TINAHELY, WICKLOW ; Farmer.

Duty should be put on live and dead meat alike for the reason that both are detrimental to the farmers of Great Britain and Ireland. If anything, live meat should be higher for the reason that it would be safer shipping throughout the summer time, and be therefore surer of being brought on the markets safe. On the other hand dead meat may have been from the carcass of very old animals, whereas when the animals are imported alive one would not be buying a pig in a bag.

1934

FORM No. 12,690. Farmer.

The graziers and farmers of this country cannot much longer compete against the imports of foreign live and dead meat. I am of opinion that a substantial duty should be imposed on all live meat imported. It would give the meat producers of this country a chance, and increased wages to all artisans and others. Compared with the rate of wages 20 or 30 years ago, the increased cost of meat would be small. I would be in favour of a lower duty on dead meat, as those people who could not afford to purchase the best meat would be satisfied with meat of an inferior quality at a lower price.

CAPT. E. G. PRETYMAN, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

The live meat trade tends to depress prices more than the dead meat trade under present conditions. The former comes in large consignments which have to be slaughtered and sold on arrival. The latter is in the hands of large importers, and is kept in store and placed on the market with some regard to maintenance of price.

1935

T. L. DODD, COTTON HALL, CHESTER ; Farmer.

I think there should be a heavier duty on live meat because so much of it is sold as English, and I think our own Colonial produce should be allowed free of duty. They helped us in our South African difficulties and one good turn deserves another.

JOHN BUEKE, CURRAGH CHASE, KILCORNAN, Co. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a duty on live meat but against that on dead. A duty on live meat would benefit farmers by raising the price of cattle. A duty on dead meat would press hard on poor people, who are mainly dependent for meat on imported bacon, &c.

R. C. EDWARDS, MULLANEY BURT, LONDONDEERRY ; Farmer.

I would be in favour of putting a 5 % extra duty on live cattle, as it would enable us to get a better price for our fat cattle and would not raise the prices to the working man.

R. F. WOODCOCK, HASLEMERE, SURREY ; Farmer.

Kill all live meat on landing. Double duty from lands not Colonies.

A. P. TURNER, THE LEEN, PEMBRIDGE, HEREFORDSHIRE.

I would impose a higher duty on foreign meat imported alive, on the grounds of humanity, and also as a means of preventing foreign meat being sold as English produce.

1936

J. J. EVANS, CANTREP, BRECON ; Farmer.

I should prefer heavier duties being imposed on live stock because there would not be so much risk of diseases being imported; and further, because a tax on live stock would tend to increase value of my own stock at home.

W. A. PERSSE, LOUGHREA, Co. GALWAY ; Farmer.

Increased duty on live meat because it comes into direct competition with the home meat. It also sells at about a $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per lb. (retail) more than the dead meat.

FORM No. 12,718. Farmer.

I would not impose a duty on dead meats—Colonial should be free—5 % duty on foreign imports would not increase the price to the public and would be an advantage to the farmer. A duty on live stock imported would be of considerable advantage to the home producer, and would in no way affect the price to the poor, because this would be consumed by those who can afford to purchase fresh meat. I would put a duty on all live stock imported.

1937. Duty on Live and Dead Meat

Higher Duty on Live Meat
—continued.

JOHN M. PARRY & Co., WESTBURY, LEOMINSTER, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Cider and Perry Makers.

I am in favour of a higher duty on imported live meat. The imported live meat is largely sold as best English or Scotch and thus competes unfairly with the home producer, whereas imported dead meat must as a rule be sold for what it really is, and thus only competes with the second and low class meats. If only dead meat were imported the poor could get cheaper meat, and those who could afford would willingly pay for the prime home produced meat if they knew they would get it ; but as things are they pay for English and get foreign.

WILLIAM HENRY STILL, CASTLE HILL, ADDINGTON, SURREY ; Farmer.

An increased duty on the live animal would tend to encourage the home feeder. More of the foreign cattle would come dead, and there would consequently be an increased demand for the fresh home-killed article.

J. BRUCE, GARTLY, R.S.O., ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

I would have the heavier duty on live animals as I am of opinion that a very large proportion of the best class of imported cattle is sold as being home-bred, thus competing directly with home-fed meat, and perhaps acting prejudicially against its character and quality.

J. SYMONDS, THISTLETON HALL, BURGH, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

A heavier duty on live meat as it is a severer competitor to the grazing and fattening farmer.

G. W. RACKHAM, HILL FARM, HETHEL, NORWICH, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

Would give dead meat the preference on account of the suffering of cattle at times on board ship. All foreign-meat sellers should be licensed.

HUGH FRASER, DANESCROFT, LISBURN, CO. DOWN ; Farmer.

I think a greater duty should be put on live meat. Our cattle trade is the all important and only resource of the British farmer. Any admission of foreign live cattle into our markets is most liable to introduce cattle disease. Our climate is most favourable for cattle raising. We have the best of cattle of every description, all most free from disease, hence we have the foreigner coming to us to buy our well-bred sound cattle for breeding purposes. Our breeding of good cattle gives employment which otherwise would not be given.

JOHN D. MAXTED, LOWER GARRINGTON, LITTLEBOURNE, KENT ; Farmer.

A distinct difference should be made in the duties imposed on live and dead meat, a higher duty being imposed on live meat, as imported live meat is sold as English, much to the disadvantage of the latter, while dead meat is easily distinguished from English, and not so readily palmed off on the public as such.

1938

REV. JAMES CARDWELL GARDNER, FLUKE HALL, NEAR GARSTANG, LANCs. ; Farmer.

No live meat should come—(1) Prevent importation of disease ; (2) encourage home grown ; (3) steadier prices to home stock. I advocate a small duty on dead meat.

JOHN COSSINS, TARRANT RAWSTON, BLANDFORD, DORSET ; Farmer.

The duty on live meat should at least be double that of dead meat, because live meat is sold here as home produced, and I am of opinion that to bring live cattle by ship is gross cruelty.

FORM No. 12,402. Farmer.

Live meat ought certainly to be the heavier taxed, as dead meat is the food, to a large extent, of the poor, and is usually sold as such, whereas live meat is brought over expressly to compete with our home-grown cattle, and therefore gives a bigger return to the exporters. The crowding of fat bullocks on to steamers to sell on arrival is a trade that, in my opinion, ought to cease, especially as every year better refrigerating methods are adopted.

P. F. ASTILL, COSSINGTON, LEICESTER ; Farmer.

I am in favour of the duty being higher on live meat, as it comes directly in competition with the home produced ; in fact, it is nearly all sold as English.

DAVID PLAYFAIR, MORPHIE, MONTROSE, KINCARDINESHIRE ; Farmer.

Duty on live cattle should be double that on dead meat, as live cattle comes in competition with home-fed cattle.

E. W. WILSON, FLITCHAM ABBEY, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

Live meat should be taxed heavier than dead, on account of the cruelty in transit.

G. G. REA, MIDDLETON, WOOLER, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty being placed on live meat, because much of it is sold as home grown and fed, and so comes into unfair competition with the *bona fide* home produced meat. I should, further, urge the Commission to insist that all foreign meat, whether imported alive or dead, should be branded and sold as such.

FORM No. 12,340. Farmer.

A larger duty should be imposed on live than on dead meat, because while it would not appreciably check the importation of meat into this country, still it would be inclined to encourage its importation in a state less likely to compete with the home-fed meat.

1939

1940

1941

A. WELLS, GODALMING, SURREY ; Farmer.

The duty should be charged on live animals on account of cruelty.

T. F. HANCOCK, BROOM HALL, SUNNINGDALE, ASCOT ; Farmer.

For absolute security for our live stock I would not allow any to be imported. I think all should come as dead meat, and so the greatest possible encouragement be given to produce our own live stock, which is too much neglected. A duty on dead meat would no doubt favour such production.

CAPT. W. S. LEVETT, MILSTATE HOUSE, MILFORD, STAFFORD ; Farmer.

I object to any live meat passing out of the port of debarkation.

S. ALLISON, BELLARENA, LONDONDERY ; Farmer.

I would be against admitting live stock on any terms, as rearing young stock is about the only thing left to the Irish farmer.

Admission of Store Cattle

JAMES MCGLINCY, J.P., STRABANE, DONEGAL ; Merchant.

I am opposed to taxing dead meat at all. I am in favour of taxing live meat of every description, especially store cattle, as this branch of foreign industry is not only a direct menace, but a direct injury to the graziers and stallers of the United Kingdom, not to mention the danger of importing cattle diseases among our home-bred stock. I would not even exempt the Colonies from a substantial tax on live stock.

1942

JAMES FALCONER, MICHELDEVER, HANTS ; Farmer.

I am in favour of the duties on live meat being double those on dead, as, doubtless, considerable quantities of the live meat imported are bought by butchers and sold as home meat, in competition with the home feeders. There would still be the large importations of Canadian live stock, and, in my opinion, store as well as fat cattle ought to be admitted from Canada. It seems altogether outrageous and unreasonable that the British feeder cannot have access to a supply of the healthiest store stock in the world. Surely an arrangement could be made whereby Canada could prohibit States cattle entering the Dominion.

J. G. BATEMAN, CAMP, KERRY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

I am strongly in favour of an increased duty on live stock, as being admitted into Great Britain, it would serve to simply kill at least the Irish stock raised, and probably spread disease, no matter how vigilant we may be. On no account am I in favour of live stock being imported into the country.

SIR HENRY H. SCOTT, HIPSBURN, LESBURY, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

I think there should be no importation of live animals.

1943

J. KNIGHT, HARTING, PETERSFIELD, HANTS ; Farmer.

No live stock should be imported here if possible ; if they are, a heavier duty should be placed on them than on dead meat simply to keep out disease.

B. B. SAPWELL, SANKENCE, AYLISHAM, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

If stores are not admitted to England, it would be well to keep out all live animals (except quarantine animals for breeding), and have the meat all come dead. The beasts suffer enormously on the journey and lose much flesh, both quantity and quality ; but the slaughterers can dress it and sell it as English.

M. NUNAN, BALLYROBBIN, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

The Government should not on any account allow store cattle to be imported into Great Britain. The land of Ireland will be all bought out, and it behoves the Government to look to the interests of their own tenants, for if the price of store cattle should fall there, tenants would not be able to meet liabilities.

MAJOR R. H. B. GALBRAITH, J.P., LOUGHREA, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

I would not admit store cattle.

1944

W. MITCHELL, BESSBOROUGH FARM, PILTOWN, CO. KILKENNY ; Farm Manager.

Yes ; tax all live meat shipped and keep a permanent stop on store cattle being imported, as then meat shipped direct would be frozen or condensed in some manner and would never seriously hurt the home-meat trade as at present is being done, in fact in the beef trade the foreigner rules the British market.

FORM No. 12,681. Farmer.

I am decidedly in favour of a heavier duty on live meat than dead, for in the first place the duty on dead meat would come nearly all out of the working man's pocket, while the duty on live meat or store cattle comes from another source, as they would be bought by the British farmers to be fed, and eventually find their way to the rich man's table, for he alone will pay the price of British-fed meat. Another reason, and the principal one, why I am in favour of higher duty on live meat is we have to live principally in this country by our trade with the farmers of England and Scotland in store cattle, and if these cattle were allowed into England free this country would be bankrupt.

JOHN QUINN, KIMVARA, CO. GALWAY ; Farmer.

I am in favour of duties on live stock. If store cattle and sheep are allowed into the country the farmers throughout England and Ireland will be seriously injured in their industry.

1945 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

Admission of Store Cattle

—continued.

EDWARD BRIDGMAN, ASKEATON, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

I would prefer to have a higher tariff on live meat, as if store cattle are brought in and fattened in the country they would run down the price of beef, being brought in at a low price, they can be sold, when fat, cheaper, for a corresponding profit.

T. HODGINS, MULLINAHONE, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

The duties to be imposed on live cattle should be much higher, because if store cattle continue being brought into this country, farmers cannot get on, as it is only on store cattle anything is to be made at present.

J. MILNE, INVEURIE, ABERDEEN ; Farmer.

Canadian stores when imported were profitable. 1st, because the fat lost on the voyage was rapidly replaced by feeding, and 2nd, because they were mixed up and sold as home meat. Much of it was coarse ; several London meat salesmen informed me that Aberdeenshire-fed Canadian cattle were the worst meat that came into that market, and would soon have ruined the high character of our home-bred meat. I would exclude stores, for the sufferings of a cargo of cattle at sea in a storm are horrible. They have either to run the risk of suffocation or drowning. I have frequently seen cargoes arrive with bulwarks and fixings broken and many cattle washed overboard. Those in charge have told me that sometimes for a whole week many of them get neither food, nor water to drink. Apart from this, beef and mutton can be carried much cheaper than live cattle and their food, so that live stock is brought here that it may be sold for what it is not.

R. H. LAMB, WHEATFIELD, PORTADOWN, ARMAGH ; Grocer and Farm Produce Merchant.

All imported beef, mutton and pork should be taxed whether alive or dead, but not store cattle. The finished article of whatever kind should be taxed, but those things that would give considerable employment in the home lands should be imported free.

G. A. HARRISON, TWEED HOUSE, BERWICK-ON-TWEED ; Farmer.

I am quite in favour of a duty being imposed upon beef and mutton from other than British Colonies ; it would have a tendency to increase the price of local supplies, and also equalise shipping and railway charges. I am in favour of Canadian store cattle being sent into this country in order to compete with store cattle, which are out of all proportion to those sold when fat.

A. MOSELY, WEST LODGE, HADLEY WOOD, MIDDLESEX ; Farmer

If we import live cattle, such an industry, with the large amount of land now laid down to grass, would be remunerative to our farmers, and I think that healthy live cattle might with advantage be admitted either free or with a minimum duty. On the other hand, dead meat competes with home-grown or finished and fattened products and is detrimental to the raising of meat by the British farmer.

J. BROWN, MILTON HILL, FORRES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

Lean or store cattle should be treated as raw material and be admitted free from our Colonies.

J. GORING, IRONBARKS, STAINES ; Farmer and Butcher.

I am in favour of all live stock coming free and should greatly welcome the importation of more stock again to this country.

J. SUGGITT, SHERIFF HUTTON CASTLE, YORK ; Farmer.

I would make the importation of live cattle easy, if a clean bill of health could be shown. We are not shut up to Ireland for our supply of store cattle. The price is too high to give a good return to the grazier.

H. GRANGE, TRING, HERTS. ; Farmer.

Young live cattle coming in free are an advantage to the grazier and to Canada, which would be the main source if the embargo were taken off.

E. SNELL, NETTLESTEAD HALL, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

I desire to see the restrictions on store stock from abroad removed, if subject to careful scrutiny. I can do no good as a grazier, because whenever I want to buy stores, almost everybody then wants to do the same ; and when I return to beef everyone again is doing the same thing ; we must have cheaper stores if grazing is to be done without loss. The present restrictions are the grossest form of protection in favour of the dairy farmer, who on his part, is one of the first to complain if a small duty on corn to help the corn producer is suggested.

J. RYDE, CHIDDINGFOLD, SURREY ; Farmer.

Should prefer to see a duty of 10 % on dead meat if that were possible. Store cattle should be admitted free if sound and absolutely free from foot and mouth disease. Especially would I always admit Canadian store cattle free, if free from disease.

J. PINKERTON, SECON, BALLYMONEY, ANTRIM ; Farmer.

If the grazing lands of Great Britain and Ireland are to be taken full advantage of, store cattle should be admitted free from Canada and other places where they could be shown to have a clean bill of health. Those cattle could be grazed and finished at home and turned out to the consumer in very different condition from the cargoes of fever-stricken cattle that are introduced from abroad and slaughtered at the port of landing. Want of proper store cattle is one of the greatest drawbacks we have, and in order to meet this difficulty it must be made worth the while of the home breeders to go more extensively into cattle raising, or, if no

1946

1947

1948

1949

alteration is made with regard to the free introduction of live and dead meat, let the trade be unrestricted. Do not make slaughtering compulsory.

W. HUTCHINSON, PENRITH; Farmer.

No live stock should be allowed to come for slaughtering until the store stock is allowed to come also. My farm feeds 80 cattle and 500 sheep per annum, this is all that is sold off the farm, any small sales such as wool, being balanced by cake purchased. It pays an Imperial and local taxation £43 per annum which is equal to a tax of about 5s. per head on the cattle and 1s. on the sheep; the town of Penrith charges a toll for English cattle entering a sale. The above is about the quantity of sheep and cattle killed by some of the Penrith butchers, and the butcher selling home stock has to compete against a shop where foreign is sold which has paid nothing to local or Imperial taxation nor to town's tolls.

J. R. GOUGH, COLLEGE FARM, BUCKINGHAM, BUCKS; Farmer.

35 % should be remitted of the taxes imposed if the cattle come in store condition and are kept on a farm for 6 months; 25 % for 4 months. This would give the grazier and feeder a means of getting store cattle to feed; more people would feed instead of raising cattle, hence land fed upon with cheap cake and corn would become richer. 7½ % should be remitted of the taxes imposed on meat if the cattle come alive. This would be the means of having the hides, &c., manufactured in this country, and moreover disease could be detected in the cattle killed here.

1950

W. J. TYNAN, KILLYGORDON, DONEGAL; Farmer.

If "live" meat means store cattle, I believe it would benefit this country more to put a higher duty on such than on dead meat, as by far the greater number of farmers are engaged in dairying and raising young stock.

H. W. SITWELL, BROADWELL HOUSE, STOCKTON, RUGBY, WARWICKSHIRE; Farmer.

Live meat should have the heaviest duty, as the live animals would include stores, which compete with British breeders, and also I think it would tax a clever man's brains to say whether a piece of meat came off a foreign beast slaughtered in England, or a home bred one, whereas I think a good many people can tell the difference between frozen meat and prime English.

WM. PAGAN, MOORE ABBEY, MONASTEREVAN, KILDARE (Land Steward to the EARL OF DROGHEDA).

I would be in favour of the duty on live stock for this reason, that it would benefit the man who reared the stores as well as the man who fattened them.

34 British and Irish farmers content themselves with a single declaration in favour of a higher duty on live than on dead meat, and give as their reason the risk of importation of disease with live stock. Other replies are as follows:—

Danger of
Infectious Diseases

1951

W. H. BARFOOT SAUNT, GT. OXENDON, MARKET HARBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTON; Farmer.

I should favour difference between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat, because as the British Islands cannot produce all the meat required by their population, there must be a considerable proportion imported. It is a matter of the greatest importance to the crowded population of these Islands that the largest proportion of their food of all kinds, especially animal food, should be produced at home. The importation of live cattle, even under the most careful supervision, must always be attended with a great deal of risk of introducing cattle disease of various kinds into this country, which when they occur are always the cause of great loss—animals as well as pecuniary, the first more serious than the last. Bad as is an outbreak of disease in a herd of feeding cattle it is very much worse in a herd of breeding cattle, and the fear of this undoubtedly deters many persons from adopting this kind of occupation. The great want in the feeding districts is a plentiful supply of store cattle to fatten on the land, and as graziers are prevented from obtaining foreign stores in consequence of the law, which compels all foreign cattle to be slaughtered on landing, a much larger quantity of home-fed meat could be produced if more attention was given to breeding and rearing young stock.

J. MILNE, INVERURIE, ABERDEEN; Farmer.

In my lifetime pleuro-pneumonia, cattle plague, and foot and mouth disease have been several times imported. The first maintained its footing for 60 years. The second existed for only 2 years and was stamped out after much loss to individuals. The third, which has caused far more loss than both the others, has been many times imported and in some of its visits overran the whole Kingdom until it disappeared for want of fresh victims. In one outbreak it was calculated that 5½ millions of cattle and many sheep were attacked, causing a loss to their owners of over 11 millions sterling. Another reason is that much of the foreign meat killed in England is retailed as home.

1952

FORM No. 12,050. Farmer.

I think that the dead meat trade should be encouraged on the following grounds. The voyage subjects the animals to unnecessary pain and hardship; it also spoils the quality of the meat. There is less risk of the importation of infectious diseases than in the case of the live meat trade.

E. W. BETTS, BABINGLEY, NORFOLK; Farmer.

I am in favour of a higher duty on imported live than dead meat, as I think we still run risks of importing disease, however careful we may be. As a large grazier and breeder of both beef and mutton I should like to see all purveyors and dealers in foreign meat, whether slaughtered at home or abroad, registered as such. As undoubtedly English graziers are severely handicapped by having foreign sold on the market as prime English. This I think would also be of great benefit to consumers as they could get foreign meat without paying English price for it.

1953 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

Danger of Infectious Diseases
—continued.

THE MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S FARMERS' CLUB, BLANDFORD, DORSET ; Farmers.

A duty on imported live meat might be used to pay compensation in cases of imported disease.

W. FORRESTER ADDIE, ESTATE OFFICE, POWIS CASTLE, WELSHPOOL, MONTGOMERY ; Estate Agent.

Apply the provisions of the Foreign Meats Act even to Colonial produce. The duty should be higher on the dead meat owing to dangers of disease being introduced, greater ease of transport, and from the humane point of view.

H. S. SANKEY, FORT FREDERIC, VIRGINIA, CO. CAVAN ; Farmer.

The duty imposed upon dead meat should be represented by only the cost of killing and dressing the animal for market. But I am entirely opposed to live animals being imported except for breeding purposes, and even then under certain restrictions. I do not wish to tax the working man's food more than necessary, and again I am opposed to the policy of destroying our industries for the benefit of other countries, or for the benefit of one home section, and the all but ruin of another. The importation of live stock is a danger of great magnitude to the agricultural interests of the U.K. by reason of the many diseases foreign cattle are subject to, and this observation applies equally to Colonial cattle.

1954

FORM No. 12,168. Farmer.

I should certainly be in favour of double duty being placed on live meat. My reason is owing to the danger of importing infectious diseases into this country, and the expense we are put to in stamping those diseases out. They should therefore pay for exterminating any disease they might introduce.

H. S. WARREN SMITH, WALER HOUSE, BLETCHINGLEY, SURREY ; Farmer.

The traffic in imported hides and wool, &c., should be closely looked into to avoid anthrax.

R. H. NORMAN, BOX FARM, NEWNHAM-ON-SEVERN ; Farmer.

I would not allow live animals to be imported for the following reasons:—1st, there is great danger of bringing all kinds of diseases and affecting our flocks and herds, which dead meat cannot do, except the hides, which I am afraid cause many more diseases than is generally attributed to them. The disease anthrax is very much on the increase of late years and my opinion is imported hides are the cause. 2nd, all imported meat should be marked or branded and sold as such. If live beasts come in they may go to the slaughter house as foreign and come out as English dead meat. All dead meat should be branded on arrival and every purveyor of foreign meat licensed as such and a notice to that effect exhibited on his shop where all customers could see it.

1955

LT.-COL. W. LEWES, J.P., D.L., LLYSNEWYDD, HENLLAN, LLANDYSSUL, CARMARTHEN ; Farmer.

The danger of live meat being imported lies in the fact of the animals spreading disease in the country, and, therefore, on those grounds alone, there should be a great distinction between live and dead meat.

W. J. BURGESS, STOW, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK ; Auctioneer, Valuer and Land Agent.

No live stock should be allowed to leave the wharf where they are landed, except of course a few highly-bred ones, which should be given a long and stringent quarantine. I am aware that some farmers are desirous of allowing Canadian store cattle to come and be fattened in England. I am sure the risk of infection is too great, and sooner or later an outbreak of disease would occur and the losses to stock owners would be 10 times greater than the gains by admitting them. I do not think it is possible to import store cattle at London or other large ports, feed them and send the finished bullocks back to London again and get a profit. If killed at the port of landing I see no difference whether they arrive alive or dead.

ALDERMAN J. T. HARRISON, J.P., THE POPLARS, BUCKINGHAM ; Farmer.

There should be no relaxation of the orders for the immediate slaughter of imported live meat—which has freed our country of "foot and mouth" and cattle plague, &c.

C. PRATT, BUDBROOKE, WARWICK ; Farmer.

I would prefer all meat coming over dead, as the risk of imported disease is so great with live animals. We were nearly ruined on two occasions by outbreaks of foot and mouth in my father's time.

W. RUTHERFORD, CRAILING TOFTS, ROXBURGH, N.B. ; Farmer.

I would allow all cattle or sheep from countries free from disease to be landed on our shores and fattened here. The closing of the ports against Canadian store cattle is a perfect disgrace.

FORM No. 12,224. Auctioneer and Estate Agent.

Live stock should come in free (if free from disease) so that store stock can be bought at less money ; stores are too dear now to pay for fattening.

T. WALKER, CLONCANNON, BALLYGAR, ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

I am entirely opposed to the importation of store cattle unless a heavy duty is put on ; it would reduce the price of store cattle by half, as it did before, and in all probability bring in distemper.

H. L. FIFE, RABY ESTATES OFFICE, STAINDROP, DARLINGTON ; Farmer.

So far as this farm is concerned the free importation of live stock would be an advantage provided that no diseased stock was brought in.

1956

1957

GEORGE STREET, MAULDEN, AMPHILL, BEDFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

The greatest doubt that I foresee from Mr. Chamberlain's patriotic scheme is that unless great care is taken we shall have a re-introduction of diseases from the Colonies.

A. MANSELL, SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE ; Farmer.

I am strongly in favour of encouraging a dead meat trade, as by so doing you minimise the risk of importing disease, and if foreign meat can be distinguished by any marking from home grown, it would greatly benefit the English farmer.

W. STRATTON, KINGSTON DEVERILL, WILTS. ; Farmer.

I object to the importation of live animals on the ground of danger from disease.

D. H. JAMES, BAILYBEDW, MAESYCRUGIAN, R.S.O., CARMARTHENSHIRE ; Farmer.

As to live animals, a very strict observation ought always to be kept that they do not introduce disease of any kind into this country.

J. C. HATHERHALL, OLDBURY-ON-THE-HILL, DIDMARTON, GLOS. ; Farmer.

No live meat ought to be imported on account of imparting disease, especially now there are such facilities for carrying dead meat.

1958

W. J. MARSH, YEOVIL, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

I believe in live meat being brought in and slaughtered here, as the authorities can see that they are free from disease.

J. FLOWER, CHILMARK, SALISBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

I should allow no live meat to come in ; we might then keep our herds and flocks with a clean bill of health, whilst admitting live we never shall.

R. HEMPHILL, J.P., KILLENAULE, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

Live stock, except to be killed at the port of call, I would exclude altogether, otherwise we would have foot-and-mouth, anthrax and other diseases. Dead meat should be branded as foreign to safeguard this country. I would tax both as much as possible if sent from the U.S.A. or Argentina as retaliation for their tariff against us which chiefly affects our wool.

CARY COLES, WINTERBOURNE STOKE, SALISBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

Stockbreeders run a much greater risk of disease to their flocks and herds from the importation of live animals than from dead meat, and a large outbreak of contagious disease would have serious consequences for consumers as well as producers. It may be an advantage to the consumer to have animals imported alive and particularly to the poor populations at the ports of debarkation where slaughtered to have a large supply of cheap meat.

1959

W. BARBER, MONIAIVE, DUMFRIES-SHIRE ; Farmer.

I am in favour of all produce being admitted on same terms so far as this can be done with perfect safety to the health of home stocks. I have on the score of health, approved of the policy of the Government with regard to Canadian store cattle.

J. SCOTT, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

If live cattle be admitted into the country I would put a higher duty on them ; they are always a source of danger by bringing disease, and are more opposition to our own meat.

J. W. SMITH, THINGHILL COURT, HEREFORD ; Farmer.

I am thoroughly in favour of the present restrictions as regards the importation of live animals on the ground that it lessens the risk of importing diseases.

P. BLUNDELL, REAM HILLS, WEETON, KIRKHAM, LANCs. ; Farmer.

A distinction should be made only so far as to keep infectious (animals) diseases out of the country, which is of the first importance to the British farmer.

1960

R. BURRA, GATE, SEDBERGH, YORKSHIRE ; Farmer.

The free importation of cattle from abroad would be a most serious blow to all stock breeders in England, not only on the ground of the great risk of the importation of disease, but because we cannot compete with foreign producers.

J. P. TOONE, HIGH CROSS, RUGBY ; Farmer.

No live animal should be admitted ; if they are, most certainly raise duties and so endeavour to keep disease from our herds and flocks.

W. D. KNIGHT, RAPKYNs, NEAR HORSHAM, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

There is a great risk in spreading disease by bringing in live cattle, as the offal, &c., is sent down to the country by barge and used as manure ; therefore, live stock should have a higher duty than dead.

1961 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

Danger of Infectious Diseases
—continued.

S. MADDOCKS, HADLEY, WHITCHURCH, SALOP ; Farmer.

The dead meat trade is the best protection we have in keeping our flocks and herds free from disease ; thanks to good government in giving us restrictions on these lines. When murrain was last in this district I saw the death of 101 dairy cows on one farm.

ROBERT CHARLES WARNER, OAKSEY, MALMESBURY, WILTS. ; Farmer.

I think a higher duty should be imposed on live fat cattle, to be slaughtered at entry port, than on dead meat, because of a risk of importation of infectious animal diseases. Store cattle to be still prohibited for the same reason.

J. EVENS, BURTON, NEAR LINCOLN ; Farmer.

I would favour meat being landed alive, on one condition : it must absolutely be killed at the port of debarkation. The country is now free from disease, and if British agriculture is to continue, it is absolutely necessary that the health of our stock should be strongly safe-guarded.

E. KIDNER, KEMP'S FARM, BUCKLAND, SURREY ; Farmer.

Tax as much again all live stock imported as you would the same quantity of dead meat, because there is a much greater risk of getting disease brought into this country with live stock than with dead meat.

J. STRATTON, CHILCOMBE, WINCHESTER ; Farmer.

I think it well to impose a higher duty on live cattle than dead meat so as to encourage the latter, and to check the risk of importing cattle disease and stop the suffering endured on the voyage.

F. NEAME, MACKNADE, FAVERSHAM, KENT ; Hop Grower and Farmer.

There should be a higher duty on live than on dead meat, on the ground that meat can as well be brought here dead as alive, and dead is less likely to bring disease to our flocks and herds.

R. HUTCHINSON, KELLS, CO. KILKENNY ; Farmer.

I would put a heavier duty on live meat so as to guard against the introduction of disease ; the free importation of live cattle would ruin the dairy business as the rearing of the calves is the best part of the business.

W. KELLY GREHAN, ROSCOMMON, CO. ROSCOMMON ; Farmer.

I am in favour of putting a heavier tax on all live stock imported, because live stock are apt to carry disease and as we have many valuable herds of stock it would be a great misfortune if any disease broke out amongst them. If the heavy duty is put on live stock the large portion will come dead, and another thing that I would suggest is that all foreign meat should be labelled and sold as such.

R. N. RUSSELL, 8, BALLINACURRA TERRACE, LIMERICK ; Farmer.

If possible, put higher duty on live meat, as live cattle may introduce disease. Every disastrous outbreak of disease in my recollection has been owing to the importation of live cattle. No animal should be allowed beyond the slaughter-house at the port of landing, and I do not believe it would injure the consumer if the cattle arrived as dead meat.

F. STRATTON, NEWPORT, MONMOUTHSHIRE ; Farmer.

I should like the importation of dead meat to be encouraged rather than live, because the risk of importing disease would be limited, and much suffering to animals done away with.

DANIEL LEDSON, TARBOCK, NEAR PRESCOT, LANCASHIRE ; Farmer.

I am in favour of a rather higher duty on live meat than dead, inasmuch as there would be a much greater risk of bringing disease into this country ; it would also bring a higher price in the market, and therefore be a heavier competitor to me.

W. H. HILTON, EAST CLAYDON, WINSLOW, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

I am of opinion that live meat should pay a much heavier tax than the dead, because the chance of bringing in disease is so much greater ; in fact, we have suffered so much from imported disease in the past that I doubt if it is wise to admit live cattle at all or only under very exceptional circumstances.

G. JACK, COLINTON, MIDLOTHIAN ; Farmer.

I consider live meat should be taxed heavier than dead, owing to the dangers of introducing disease with live animals ; also to the fact that a large number of the imported live cattle and sheep are sold as home-fed.

JOHN RILEY, PUTLEY COURT, LEDBURY, HEREFORD ; Farmer.

I would keep out live meat if possible, because of disease, and I should be in favour of a heavier duty ; and live meat might be easier to palm off as home-grown.

G. FRANCE-LUSHINGTON-TULLOCK, SHANBOLARD, LETTERFRACK, GALWAY ; Farmer.

I am certainly in favour of there being a considerably higher duty on live meat. I am afraid that sooner or later contagious disease is sure to be introduced in spite of the strictest regulations, if foreign cattle are allowed to land at our ports. Moreover, I think that foreign beef should not be allowed to be sold as " home-fed " (as it always will be if landed alive) at prices much below what real home-fed can be produced for.

1962

1963

1964

1965

J. S. JOHNSTON, CRAILING HALL, JEDBURGH; Farmer.

I am in favour of a smaller duty upon dead meat than on live, and of an entirely dead meat trade. I think it unjust that agriculturists are subjected to the risk of disease from foreign stock being imported live. I think also that means should be taken to secure that all imported meat should be sold as foreign.

T. E. SMITH, KNEBWORTH, HERTS.; Farmer.

I am favourably disposed towards dead meat, because there is the risk of disease, and our facilities for breeding are practically unlimited.

H. FITZWALTER PLUMPTRE, GOODNESTONE, NEAR DOVER; Farmer.

I should make the duty heavier on live cattle—(a) To keep out cattle diseases; (b) to avoid the cruelty to some extent inseparable from long ocean transit.

A. ILES, PARK FARM, FAIRFORD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE; Farmer.

All meat ought to be brought here in a dead state, but I would have all vendors of foreign meat compelled to take a license for same. May I here say, all honour and praise ought to be given to the Board of Agriculture for their stringent efforts to stamp out disease, efforts which have often to many of us appeared excessive and annoying, but which have done the greatest good possible in keeping our flocks and herds free from disease.

1966

JAMES BOYD, TUBBER, CHURCHTOWN, DERRY, DONEGAL; Farmer.

A distinction should be made between live and dead meat coming into Great Britain. I think no live cattle should under any circumstances be admitted into this country unless under a very heavy duty. The grounds are as follows:—(1) As cattle breeding being the mainstay of Ireland, we can supply the English and Scotch farmers with all the cattle they require for feeding purposes; (2) As Irish cattle are very free from disease, and if, by the importation of foreign cattle, disease broke out, it would mean the loss of thousands of pounds to Ireland. Dead foreign meat should also be taxed. As a great deal of the dead meat comes from South America I would suggest a tax on foreign dead meat, so as to give our Colonial possessions a better chance to compete against other countries.

H. WILLIAMS, RED HOUSE, LLANSAINFRAED, ABERGAVENNY; Farmer.

The close inspection, in the interest of the public health, which home-killed meat has to undergo, and from which imported dead meat escapes, as the intestines are not seen, is a heavy handicapping for the home-killed. The same remarks apply to the relative position of home-produced and imported milk (a growing industry).

1967

JOINT COMMITTEE, MILBORNE ST. ANDREW'S, BLANDFORD, AND WINFRITH FARMERS' CLUB.

In our opinion no live stock for any purpose can be safely admitted free, owing to the danger of propagating disease, and such admission would materially affect the stock-raising industry of the country.

C 3,984; Farmer.

The opinion in this country is against admitting Canadian store cattle. Personally, if it was not for the chance of disease, from purely selfish motives I should like them; but as I consider that it would be almost ruin for the larger part of Ireland, leaving out Meath, Kildare and Dublin, I am strongly opposed to their introduction.

196 British and Irish farmers make a general statement in favour of equal duties upon imported live and dead meat. Other replies are as follows:—

No distinction
between Live and
Dead Meat

M. McCANN, LISMOY HOUSE, NEWTONFORBES, CO. LONGFORD; Farmer.

Dead or alive, I am in favour of taxation, as cattle, sheep or horses exported into any country for breeding purposes from us, are well taxed, and I cannot see where fair play comes in if the outsider is not made to pay for his exports.

1968

ANDREW PHILLIPS, BALLYKELLY, LIMAVADY; Farmer.

I would not be in favour of any distinction here, as if a heavier duty be put on dead meat and less on live it is but natural to suppose that there would be more live meat imported and less *vice versa*.

J. WESLEY MARTIN, NORTH END PLACE, FELSTEAD, ESSEX; Farmer.

I see no reason why a distinction should be made; both live and dead meat when imported should pay a fair share of taxation for access to British markets.

CAPT. H. E. WALTERS, R.N., CAER-LLAN, MONMOUTH; Farmer.

I see no reason whatever in any distinction being made between live and dead meat, preference given to either must be entirely against the agricultural interest and nullify any benefit to be derived from duty imposed.

C. J. GRIEVE, BRANKHOLM PARK, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE; Farmer.

I am in favour of no distinction being made, because both are sold generally as home produce, which is nothing else but fraud.

1969 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

No distinction between Live and Dead Meat
—continued.

WM. LIVINGSTON, NEWTON-OF-MOUNTBLAIRY, BY BANFF, N.B. ; Farmer.

I am not in favour of any difference under present conditions of slaughtering all cattle at port of landing.

A. C. MARRIAGE, PETERSFIELD, HAMPSHIRE ; Farmer.

I cannot see any difference in the two evils (if I may call it so), as they both have to be consumed, and the inferior will spoil the sale of the good. While the live are slaughtered at the port at which they arrive they cannot bring us infection with proper care.

J. POWELL, LOWER WICK, WORCESTER ; Farmer.

Seeing that all live meat that arrives in England has to be slaughtered before leaving the port, I fail to find any need for distinction between live and dead meat. Of course that alive is the more saleable and therefore the more valuable, and should pay more duty accordingly. This duty would scarcely affect the retail prices of meat ; it should not at any rate make more than $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to $\frac{1}{4}$ d. difference per lb.

LT.-COL. J. COUSSMAKER, WESTWOOD, NORMANDY, GUILDFORD, SURREY ; Farmer.

I would not make any distinction between the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat ; as much care and attention to details is required in breeding as in feeding. The people of this country who make agriculture in its many branches their profession, should receive support and assistance from Government as well as others, and to my mind, the best way of so doing is to levy import duties and relieve local taxation.

W. V. K. STENNING, J.P., HATSFORD, EAST GRINSTEAD, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

Both should be taxed—live to help to keep out disease, dead to help home trade. One effect of so much dead meat coming is that tanners do not get hides enough to tan.

R. F. WOODCOCK, FERSFIELD, DISS, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

Double duty on foreign and half duty on Colonial.

T. USHER, COURTHILL, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

As the law stands at present I see no reason for any difference. If, however, at any time store cattle should be allowed into this country for feeding purposes, then they should come in free.

ELIZABETH COONEY, KILLADUFF, AUGHIRM ; Farmer.

There is no difference in the ultimate issue between the importation of live and dead meat. Both equally affect our market and both help to keep down the prices of our fat cattle. Our own Colonies ought to be able to supply our home demands in this respect without the unfair competition which the foreigner enters into with us.

W. G. HUMPHREYS, OWLSWICK MANOR, RISBORO', BUCKS. ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between live and dead meat, but I do want a strong distinction enforced between foreign and English, as at present many people do not know the difference, never having tasted English, though they have had to pay the price.

J. GILAIRS, DUCHESS FARM, ST. OSYTH, ESSEX ; Farmer,

5 % should be put on all. No man can produce beef in this country at present prices at a profit. If beef paid to graze it would result in more employment and better farming all round. Also on the grounds that our land has to pay heavy tithes, rates and taxes, while the foreigner is nearly exempt from them, and the cost of transit is very little more to him than us.

R. TIERNEY, TEMPLEMORE, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

The importation of live and dead meat, if continued, and in an increased supply, will in a few years make grazing land in Ireland valueless, and will make the payment of any rent utterly impossible.

T. MALLEY, MAAM, GALWAY ; Farmer.

Duty should be imposed upon all imported produce, live and dead, for the following reasons:—1st, to increase the revenue of England ; 2nd, it is not fair that foreign countries impose duties upon all English exports, and for England to give them a free admittance, thereby increasing the revenue of those countries, impoverishing the English revenue and losing the benefits which would be derived therefrom. I am entirely in accord with Mr. Chamberlain's views as set forth by him in this matter.

J. MARK, MYROE, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

I would make no distinction as between dead meat and the live animal. This will give the man who produces the store and the man who finishes it into beef an equal chance. As a rule Ireland is a store-producing country, whereas Great Britain, and especially Scotland, may be said to be a finishing country. And so taxing live and dead meat equally will serve largely to establish equality at home.

A. BRYAN, PRIESTOWN, TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

My only way of making money is preparing cattle for good stores for the English market. My profits are now very much reduced owing to the free delivery into this country of both live and dead meat, good cattle do not bring the price they should.

WALTER MANFIELD, WOOTH GRANGE, BRIDPORT ; Farmer.

I would tax both or neither.

1970

1971

1972

1973

W. D. WEBBER, MITCHELSTOWN CASTLE, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

In the interests of the farmer (one whose profits depend on the production of the soil) it is important that there should be no distinction—by weight—in the rate of duty between live and dead meat. In the interests of the consumer of meat a distinction would be advantageous—equal to the difference of live weight and dead weight as usually quoted in the principal cattle markets.

W. IRELAND, FAIRLADIES, ST. BEES ; Farmer.

I do not wish to see anything imposed in either case, as I cannot approve of any impost being charged on the people's food merely to ensure the landowners higher rents for their farms than they ought to receive.

D. STACK, FERMOY, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

A substantial duty on both live and dead meat, and store cattle should not be admitted on any account.

J. M. CLINTOCK, MANAMNY, DUNKINEELY, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

I would be glad to see a duty put on coarse foreign cattle, as I remember getting up to £18 and £20 for cattle, while in late years the same cattle sold for from £12 to £14.

R. R. ROBINSON, LETTERKENNY, DONEGAL ; Land Steward.

No distinction ; all things should be charged duty save raw corn.

M. O'BRIEN, COOLAGOM, SCARRIFF, CO. CLARE ; Farmer.

I am not in favour of duties on either dead or live meat.

P. J. O'REILLY, CROSSMOLINA, MAYO ; Farmer.

I do not think any duty should be imposed as the working classes cannot afford any increase in the price of meat, and I think that the price of beef and mutton, &c., for the last few years is leaving the farmer a reasonable profit.

D. E. BYRD, SPURSTOW HALL, TARPORLEY, CHESHIRE ; Farmer.

Put a duty of 10 % on both.

E. M. NUNNELEY, WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ; Farmer.

I am strongly opposed to any duty being placed on either, as I believe that any such duty would be very injurious to the masses of the people, especially in towns ; though it might benefit a (comparatively) few individuals, especially the landowners.

A. MISKIN, CHART SUTTON, KENT ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made, always provided the live meat is slaughtered on disembarkation.

J. STUART, GARSTANG, LANCS. ; Farmer

Under present existing conditions as regards infectious diseases, I should not make any distinction.

C. LAKE, OAKLEIGH, HIGHAM, KENT ; Farmer.

Make it all pay alike, but let the general public know whether they are eating fresh or frozen meat, which 75 % of them do not, and cannot know at present.

T. J. B. FRANKLIN, EYNHAM, OXON. ; Farmer

No distinction should be made in either live or dead meat. I should be sorry to hear of any disease from imported live cattle brought to England.

T. GARLAND, ARDLETHEN, ELLON, ABERDEENSHIRE ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between live and dead meat. Farmers ought to be encouraged to breed their own cattle.

FORM No. 12,031. Farmer.

There is very little to choose in favour of either, although, no doubt, the live cattle compete more directly with our own ; but the chilled and frozen meat, coming in the splendid condition which it does (although unknown to the majority of farmers), is by far our strongest opponent, especially the chilled.

R. GOODE NORMAN, THE MANOR FARM, RUFFORD ABBEY, OLLERTON, NOTTS. ; Farmer.

If England is the best market for live and dead meat, importers should pay for the benefit of being allowed to send it to market.

W. FENNELL, RATHSIDE, BALLYTORE, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I would tax both, as the consumer would pay no more. Meat is quite as dear, and particularly this year, as when we were getting 5s. to 8s. per cwt. (dead) more for our fat cattle. As to sheep, the prices have been fair recently, owing to scarcity.

T. DAVIES, NEEDWOOD, BEBINGTON, CHESHIRE ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between live and dead meat that is sold here. It is all foreign, and ought to be sold as such. The beasts killed here after a sea passage cannot be as good as best English, especially if killed immediately on landing, after, say, sea sickness. the beasts having been off their feed for days. The dead, frozen or chilled, speaks for itself.

1974

1975

1976

1977 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

No distinction between Live and Dead Meat
—continued.

J. P. SOWERBY, STOKESLEY, R.S.O., YORKS. ; Farmer.

There need be no distinction, so long as proper provision is made against the importation of disease.

J. T. CAMERON, STRUAN, ISLE OF SKYE, N.B. ; Farmer.

Provided all foreign animals are slaughtered at the port of landing, sold as foreign and imported meat, and provided that it is declared illegal for butchers to sell foreign meat under the name of home meat, I see no reason for any distinction being made. Foreign produce of every description ought to be labelled foreign when sold. The British public will always prefer to buy home produce if they can afford it, and there ought to be strict regulations accordingly.

B. J. HODGSON, LEYBURN, YORKSHIRE ; Farmer.

Some payment ought to be levied on all foreign produce sent into this country, as we have to maintain the roads for carrying it.

E. FENNESSY, KILKENNY, IRELAND ; Farmer.

I am not in favour of duties on live or dead meat, as I think it would tend to the land going even more out of cultivation.

1978

B. SIMONS, THE GRANGE, WILLOUGHBY, ALFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE ; Farmer, Grazier, and Auctioneer.

Carefully protected against the possibility of the importation of impure dead meat, and the live cattle free from disease, I cannot see any reason to differentiate. I entirely disapprove of any attempt being made to make a scramble of this great question, so that this or that industry shall have the greater benefit. Agriculture should be carefully safeguarded against other industries receiving undue advantages. At the same time, accepting the great principle enunciated by Mr. Chamberlain, I think it would be a mistake for agriculturists to clamour for this and that advantage without having due regard to the general consumer.

W. B. BLUNDELL, THE STOCKING FARM, LEICESTER ; Farmer.

No distinction, if we are protected against the importation of disease.

T. S. MOYLES, BALLYCOLLAN, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

Under the conditions at present prevailing as regards the immediate slaughter of imported live stock from U.S.A., it could not make any difference. If these restrictions were removed, and store cattle imported to be fattened by British farmers and graziers, they should benefit by no duty paid, but the small farmer or rearer would suffer somewhat. At the present average price of beef it is quite impossible to buy store cattle to fatten and sell when fat at a profit.

1979

LT.-COL. F. HEARD, J.P., LEHENA HOUSE, CORK, AND CAMIRA, NENAGH, CO. TIPPERARY ; Farmer.

Both live and dead meat imported are most injurious, and farmers can reckon on nothing, as all our calculations are upset, as we never know when market may be glutted.

W. J. McMINN, THE BUSH, DUNGANNON, TYRONE ; Farmer.

I would say 10 % on both dead and live meat and on all store cattle.

ARTHUR F. PARTRIDGE, WHARTON COURT, LEOMINSTER ; Farmer.

No distinction, but put the duty high enough to lessen the British farmers' taxes, and improve the sale of British-fed meat.

A. BUTTERWORTH, HATHERDEN, NEAR ANDOVER ; Farmer.

No distinction, although there is danger of disease being introduced into this country by the importation of live stock, but, if any change made, should prefer live stock being charged a higher duty than dead stock. I should impose the same duty upon live meat as upon dead meat, but should allow our Colonies to send their meat either live or dead free.

F. MARTIN, HUBBERTS BRIDGE, BOSTON, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between live and dead meat, but what I do suggest is that if a duty is imposed, all foreign meat, either imported dead or killed on arrival, should be branded so that the British public can know whether they are supplied with English or foreign.

1980

C. M. BRUCE, FORRES, N.B. ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between the duties on live and dead meat, excepting in the case of tinned meats, which, from the nature of it, cannot be inspected, either as regards soundness or quality, and its use should be discouraged. Its use, in fact, should be suppressed, unless the factories where it is prepared are under proper official inspection. Even then, storing in tin might not be the healthiest mode of preserving of food, as is often found in the case of tinned salmon, green peas, &c.

E. W. B. CLIFT, SHERBORNE ST. JOHN, BASINGSTOKE, HANTS. ; Farmer.

No distinction ; tax both and ease our rates. We cannot possibly compete against the foreigner, taking into consideration the rent, rates and taxes, also labour, that we have to pay, and the price of our produce at the present time.

JOHN LAVERACK, NORTH CARLTON, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

No distinction, so long as all cattle are slaughtered at port of debarkation.

1981

A. RHIBBLE, BROON HOUSE, ALNWICK, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

There need be no difference. Any difference in cost of transport will be balanced at this end.

R. CARR, GRINDON, NORHAM-ON-TWEED, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

As all live animals have to be slaughtered at the ports, I see no need for any distinction.

T. BAXTER, DUTTON HALL, WARRINGTON, CHESTER ; Farmer.

It will not make much difference on which duty is imposed.

WM. FISHER (Agent for Capt. WENTWORTH, Ex-M.P.), ESTATE OFFICE, WENTWORTH CASTLE, BARNSLEY, YORKS. ; Farmer.

If foreign disease is kept out, I would make no distinction between live and dead meat.

W. W. KEEL, STANTON DREW, BRISTOL, SOMERSET ; Farmer.

I would make no distinction, but it should all be branded so that the consumer may know what he is paying for.

WM. SCOTT, ORCHARD, HAWICK, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

No distinction, the duty should just be so much per sheep or bullock, dead or alive.

1982

J. OLIVER, LYNWOOD HOUSE, HAWICK, ROXBURGH ; Farmer.

I am opposed to the importation of lean cattle into this country owing to the danger of their bringing disease. I do not see that any distinction can be made between the duties to be imposed on live stock (if slaughtered at the port of debarkation) and dead meat.

B. E. NICHOLLS, BILLINGHURST, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

If all live stock is slaughtered on arrival here, I do not think it needs any distinction from dead meat, provided all infection from disease is provided against.

R. WRIGHT, PRUMPLESTON HOUSE, CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE.

I am not in favour of any distinction, but certainly keep live cattle from coming into the country except for immediate slaughter, and then only from Canada ; by no means from the Argentine Republic.

D. MACKINTOSH, DUNAMAISE, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

I should make no distinction : would like to see a duty more or less on all foreign products coming into Britain, except on things which Britain or British Colonies cannot produce ; these things should be all free.

P. E. MEREDITH, CLARA HILL, MOUNTMELICK, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

It is not easy to draw a distinction. The importation of live cattle tends of course to reduce the prices of home bred, and the importation of dead stuff is killing the beef trade. I myself would not make any distinction, but impose a substantial duty on both.

1983

J. TREADWELL, WINCHENDON, AYLESBURY, BUCKS ; Farmer.

It will not make much difference, but probably it would be better for the importer to send it in alive, and the offals would be consumed by our wage-earning classes to their advantage.

I. MORTON, WESTEND, WICKWAE, R.S.O., GLOS. ; Farmer.

There would be no advantage in making any distinction. Steps should be taken for all foreign to be sold as such instead of being palmed off as English as at present.

B. STIMPSON, PARK FARM, BIXLEY, NORWICH, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

Both live and dead meat should pay some duty, as the same quantity would still be sent us. The consumer here would pay no more for the meat he purchased.

R. S. CLEMENTS, J.P., BERAGH, TYRONE ; Farmer.

No distinction between the two would be necessary so long as the importation of stores be disallowed.

1984

A. MAJOR, CASTLE CARY, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

Live imports interfere more with Irish grazing than dead meat, but a small duty on both would not be felt by consumers, and would do much to relieve the difficulties Irish farmers have to contend with.

J. THOMPSON, BECKFIELD, RATHDOWNEY, QUEEN'S CO. ; Farmer.

I am not in favour of any distinction, as if there is only a duty on one kind, there will be a larger importation of the other ; of course there is always the danger of live cattle bringing disease into the country.

J. BELL, ARTANA, DROMARA, CO. DOWN ; Farmer.

There should be no distinction on live and dead meat, as the duties no doubt would be put on according to the value of each.

J. D. LEMON, KILLUCAN, WESTMEATH ; Farmer.

I do not see why any distinction should be made between live and dead meat ; any tax would help the staple industry of Ireland (rearing and feeding of cattle and sheep) and by a source of revenue would relieve the present heavy taxation.

1985

Duty on Live and Dead Meat

No distinction between Live and Dead Meat

—continued.

P. GEOGHEGAN, D.C., DERRYGLINNA, P.O., MAAM., Co. GALWAY ; Farmer.

A duty should be imposed on both live and dead meat, as it is impossible to pay rent while the foreigner with land almost rent free can flood the English markets with his meat free of duty.

S. F. EATON, TYRONE, IRELAND ; Farmer.

There is not much difference to my mind. Of course, if the cattle are sent in alive they give some employment getting them slaughtered and some money is spent in that way, but, if sent in dead there would not be so much consumed.

W. MARRIAGE, DILBRIDGE HALL, COLCHESTER, ESSEX ; Farmer.

It would be of great advantage to the dairy farmer if live cattle could be introduced with a duty to correspond with that on dead meat, especially to farmers desirous of keeping for dairy produce Dutch and other cows of Continental breeds, the importation of which is now altogether prohibited. If Dutch cows could be brought in the east of England dairy farmers would greatly benefit.

J. K. ECCLES, LANDENS, HORLEY, SURREY ; Farmer.

The restriction of dead meat, and the encouragement of live meat importation would be an advantage to graziers such as myself. On the other hand the importation of live meat and the restriction of dead, would be equally hard on breeders.

1986

C. ROBERTSON, HALLHILL-BY-BERRIE, KINCARDINE N.B. ; Farmer.

As long as live cattle have to be slaughtered at the port of debarkation, I think the duty, if any is imposed, ought to be the same, on the ground that with the facilities of transport, dead meat can be brought in a good condition ; but I think so long as the present methods exist all imported beef, whether brought in live or dead should be registered, and when exposed for sale labelled as foreign beef. This would give a chance for our home-fed, as many would give a little more for home-fed beef than for foreign if they were sure they were getting it.

T. B. NEWITT, CRANFORD, KETTERING, NORTHAMPTON ; Land and Estate Agent and Farmer.

No distinction should be made between the duties imposed on live and dead meat unless it be that there may be more danger of introducing disease into the country with live animals, and that perhaps a higher duty on them might act as a deterrent from sending ; at the same time the amount of industry which would be created by the slaughter in this country would be considerable.

H. M. ODLUM, RATHANGAN, KILDARE ; Farmer.

The duty on live and dead meat should be relatively the same, perhaps with the exception of young cattle under two years old on which a lighter tariff could be levied.

1987

R. A. GILFILLAN, THE CROSS, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

I would go in for 5 % all round, as, whether live or dead, the imported meat supplies a demand that could be met by home-raised stock, and, of course, reduces our prices.

P. S. MARSDEN, HOAR CROSS, BURETON-ON-TRENT, STAFFS. ; Farmer.

All imported meat should be liable to duty. The butchers are getting the profits at the present time—not the farmers.

G. C. ALEXANDER, HUGLETT'S FARM, HEATHFIELD, SUSSEX ; Farmer.

There should be no distinction ; but no stores allowed to enter the country from abroad.

R. ANDERSON, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

There need be no distinction made between live and dead meat coming into the country, as they are both manufactured articles, and can be brought here in equally good condition. Our business here as beef producers is certainly handicapped and crippled by allowing the U.S.A. beef in, which is the manufactured article, and keeping out the Canadian store cattle, which is the raw material out of which we have to produce our home beef.

1988

HASLER & CLAPHAM, DUNMOW, ESSEX ; Farmers.

The taxes on production of meat in this country are all so heavy, the importation of foreign dead meat so large, and the price at which it is sold so small, that duty would not be seriously felt, and would, in our opinion, materially help the Exchequer. The restriction on the importation of live cattle will probably suffice ; but, on the principle of taxing the manufactured article, store stock should be admitted free, whenever it is safe to do so.

J. CALDWELL, MEENAHONEY, CASTLEFIN, DONEGAL ; Farmer.

So long as cattle are slaughtered at the port of debarkation, I would not be in favour of any distinction being made between the duties on live or dead meat.

W. YOUNG, D.L., BROCKLEY PARK, STRADBALLY, QUEEN'S CO., IRELAND ; Farmer.

Both should be taxed, the former on account of the great risk the importation of live animals entails by the spreading of infectious diseases among our herds and flocks, as well as cutting down of prices. The free importation of dead meat takes away the greater part of the profit the home feeder would otherwise make, and has brought the stall feeding of cattle and the folding of sheep on turnips to such a point, that any profit in those departments of farming almost vanishes. These two processes form the best methods for the production

of farmyard manure and improvements of the land, on which successful tillage so much depends. In any case some efficient method of branding or marking foreign and imported meat should be adopted.

GEO. PETRIE, ELGIN ; Farmer.

There is no need for any distinction, but I am in favour of allowing store cattle into the country without restriction.

C. A. WEBB, QUARTERTOWN, MALLOW, CO. CORK ; Farmer.

Both should be taxed, as they at present escape the heavy taxation that British and Irish farmers labour under. There is also a great danger in allowing live cattle into this country at all, owing to the likelihood of bringing contagious disease amongst our own flocks and herds.

ALFRED PARTON, LEA HALL, NANTWICH ; Farmer.

It will not make much difference either way ; but with cattle slaughtered in this country we should be able to buy bones, &c., for the land cheaper than if they were killed elsewhere.

A. E. PAYNE, WALFORD MANOR, BASCHURCH, SHREWSBURY ; Farmer.

No distinction should be made between live and dead meat, if it is the finished article. Store animals might be imported free, if this could be done with safety from disease, which is very doubtful. Feeders of cattle undoubtedly at times pay too dearly for their lean animals, but what is their loss is the gain of another kind of farmer, viz., the rearer of cattle, so there is no loss to the agricultural interest. If the price of meat was raised by the import duty—or, as is more likely, by the increased employment and better wages, the result of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals—the position of the feeder would be improved, and no necessity would arise for cheaper store animals by free importation.

J. HUNTER, BLAKELAW FARM, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, NORTHUMBERLAND ; Farmer.

Tax them all alike ; it will do no harm and raise revenue.

A. B. HOLT, BROUGHTON GRANGE, NEAR BRIGG, LINCOLNSHIRE ; Farmer.

The duty should be put on both ; if you put duty on live meat it is the same either way, because you get your beast killed on landing, and on dead meat the same duty should be put. But pedigree stock should be allowed to come in free if for breeding purposes.

M. WESTROPP, J.P., KILDIMO, CO. LIMERICK ; Farmer.

I am very much in favour of the duties to be imposed on live and dead meat, because Ireland, as a rule, rears a lot of cattle, and fattens them for the English market. At present it does not pay to buy stores, because there is no price for beef, so that the rearer cannot sell them to the man that farms them, as there is very little difference between the prices of stores and beef cattle.

A. AMOS, SPRING GROVE FARM, WYE, KENT ; Farmer.

I am in favour of no duties on any article of food, alive or dead. I want freedom to grow what I think will pay me, and security that I shall not be made to pay more if I increase the letting value of my holding.

J. B. STORY, 6, MERLIN SQUARE, DUBLIN ; Farmer.

I am not in favour of any duties on meat, corn, flour, or other food stuffs.

T. CARRINGTON SMITH, ADMASTON, RUGELY, STAFFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

Perhaps my best answer is to say at once that I am convinced that no import duties on meat or on grain are within the range of practical politics, and that I am pledged to vote against such duties everywhere and always.

Many of the foregoing answers have included a recommendation in favour of the marking of foreign meat. Further specific recommendations of this kind are as follows :—

Marking of Meat

G. W. CONSTABLE, INNERLEITHEN, PEEBLES ; Estate Agent.

All foreign dead meat should be marked and sold as such—were this done, it would not only help the British feeder, but would secure fair play for him, which at present he is not getting.

A. FOTHERINGHAM, FORDOUN, KINCARDINESHIRE ; Farmer.

Foreign meat should be imported dead with a duty imposed, labelled and sold as such.

S. READ, SANDEBTON, PRINCES RISBORO, BUCKS. ; Farmer.

No duty the Government could impose would benefit the farmer. The only thing that could be done would be to have all imported meat labelled and sold as such.

W. DUNN, REDDEN HALL, KELSO, ROXBURGHSHIRE ; Farmer.

The only way to protect the home-fed cattle, sheep and pigs, is to only allow foreign meat of all kinds to enter the country as dead meat. The same should be branded as foreign meat and sold as such.

H. HOFF, SHOULDHAM THORPE, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

All foreign meat should be branded or marked and sold as such.

1993 **Duty on Live and Dead Meat**

C. J. JOHNSTON, NEWMILL, ELGIN, N.B. ; Farmer.

Foreign meat should come in dead and be branded as foreign or Colonial.

Marking of Meat
—continued.

W. GUILD, J.P., PARKHILL, NEWBURGH, FIFE ; Farmer.

Dead meat should either be sold by itself or stamped so that the purchaser might know what he is getting. I miss the Canadian store cattle ; I always found them profitable to feed, as they grew so well, having such good constitutions. I found the heifers turn into splendid cows. It has never been proved that there was any disease amongst them. Our stocks at home are requiring the healthy Canadian heifers for breeding purposes, as we have a tremendous proportion of " piners " at all auction sales. The tendency to send all our best bulls abroad is very bad for our home stocks. The foreigner does not take a bull unless it can pass the " tuberculin " test, thus leaving their cast-offs to mate our cows, and in time this will have a very bad result.

F. E. & J. TAYLOR, HERMITAGE, NEWBURY, BERKS. ; Farmers.

The greater portion of the English-killed foreign meat is sold as English, and I would suggest that all butchers should be compelled to mark all foreign meat and sell it as such. As a producer I feel very strongly on this point.

1994

ELI C. HUTCHINGS, HIGHCLIFFE-ON-SEA, NEAR CHRISTCHURCH, HANTS. ; Farmer.

All foreign meat should be labelled and sold as such, and not palmed off on the British public as English meat, as it is at present by the retail shops all over the country. This would make the price of English meat better, and so benefit the graziers and farmers and give the public the opportunity of knowing what they were buying.

F. GITTUS, WEST ROW, MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK ; Farmer.

Live meat (after slaughter here) can be passed off without detection as home-killed meat, and therefore ought to be heavier taxed, but at the same time the dead meat should in some way be labelled as foreign, and be more sharply looked after.

H. HAILLEY, GT. WYMONDLEY, STEVENAGE, HERTS. ; Farmer.

Merchandise Marks Act ought to apply to all imported dead meat.

C. DEVEREUX, WEYBREAD, HARLESTON, NORFOLK ; Farmer.

I am in favour of all these duties because I do not consider it will cost the consumer in this country anything more, as it is their surplus and but little value in their country. Have all foreign meat branded so that everyone may know what they are buying. England must put her foot down and say that we will have fair trade or we will charge you the same percentage as you charge us.

1995

A. REEVES, REEVEMOUNT, ATHY, KILDARE ; Farmer.

I would have a duty on both. All foreign meat should be sold under a label specifying it as foreign, and whether " Argentina," " New Zealand," or wherever it may come from.

J. WILLINGTON, J.P., ST. KIERANS, BIRE, KING'S CO. ; Farmer.

Frozen meat should be sold only as frozen meat, and no one should be allowed to retail foreign meat, whether imported dead or alive, without having it labelled as such, and a license to sell it should be necessary. No one should be allowed to sell foreign and home-grown meat in the same shop ; so long as they are sold together the public will be cheated unless the foreign meat is branded. Margarine and butter should not be sold in the same shop, unless margarine is coloured so as to distinguish it from butter.

WM. ASPLIN, CHURCH STREET, AMBLESIDE ; Butcher and Bacon Curer.

I do not consider the foreign meat needs marking, the difference in appearance from home killed is so apparent that no one need be deceived in purchasing their own meat, but I consider the dealer in foreign and Colonial meat should be compelled to announce the fact, as well as the man who sells horseflesh ; there could then be no deception practised. Again, I consider that were the whole trade licensed in the same manner as game dealers, say £5 per annum for every trader, we should not suffer as we do to-day from itinerant meat sellers, whose rubbish is killed in stables, back kitchens, &c. (in some cases where there is infectious disease), and then sold at a fraction less than the legitimate trader can purchase his stock at market for. This I consider one of the causes for so many butchers introducing the foreign meat to assist them in competing with the sellers of rubbish, who steal away their legitimate trade.

1996

Imported Meat sold as British

H. GEORGE, KIMPTON HALL, WELWYN, HERTFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

A higher duty should be imposed on live fat cattle, for at the present time they are sold at Deptford Market alive, and killed there, put into trucks and sent all over the country as English-killed meat, which keeps the price of our English produced meat at a much lower price than it would be if it came dead.

W. H. THOMSON, OVER ROXBURGH, ROXBURGH, N.B. ; Farmer.

The only form of protection I want as a farmer is from having foreign meat sold as home. Newly killed foreign meat may deceive anyone, but an inspector could readily distinguish anything which has been chilled

1997

or frozen for a voyage. By allowing only dead meat to land, the risk of introducing disease, *e.g.*, foot and mouth, would be greatly lessened. The rich consumer could rely on getting the home meat he is willing to pay for, and the greater quantity of chilled or foreign meat sold as such would cheapen the meat supply of the working classes.

J. C. MOUNTAIN, WELBOURNE, LINCOLN ; Farmer.

I would advocate a higher duty on live meat until the Government passes a Bill compelling every butcher to hold a license who sells foreign meat, and that license to be placed in a conspicuous place in his shop, as a large proportion of the foreign beef is sold as English in the country, both to the detriment of the consumer, who pays the full English price, and to the detriment of the producer of English beef.

H. BLACKBURN, ANNAT, CORPACH, ARGYLL ; Farmer.

Any distinction would only benefit such butchers who are unscrupulous enough to label the meat imported alive as "Home Killed."

J. A. COOPER, INSCH, ABERDEEN ; Farmer.

I am of opinion that our foreign meat should be all dead meat, and not killed at the port of landing as at present ; until that is done, foreign and home beef will be mixed up and sold for home produce, do what you will.

J. MILLS WHITE, CIRENCESTER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE ; Farmer.

Live meat competes most with ours, as it is sold as best English, and deceives customers who would prefer the latter, if they could get it.

T. JONES, BALLINGLEN, RATHDRUM, CO. WICKLOW ; Farmer.

Not under the present system, as I find from what information I can gather, that a number of imported cattle on being slaughtered when landed are purchased by butchers and resold as Irish and English fed cattle. I also feel confident that a duty of 5 % on meat or even more would not raise the price on the consumer as I find from personal experience that no matter how the price of fat cattle varies, the butcher always charges a fixed price. The price of beef on foot at present is from 6 % to 10 % lower than it has been for the last 30 years, yet both in city and country the butcher charges the same as when he paid the higher price for cattle.

J. MILNE, INVERURIE, ABERDEEN ; Farmer.

A considerable proportion of foreign beef is retailed as home beef, and a 5 % duty would not be more than the retail butcher and foreign merchant profit by this fraud, which is difficult to stop. In the northern parts of the county where many cattle of the best class are fed, they must be stall-fed for 7 months in the year, so that they cannot be sold cheaply unless at a loss to the producer who is chagrined to know that U.S.A. and other beef is palmed on the public for best home. A duty of 5 % would not increase the price much, if any, and as in the case of grain it would not be so much as the taxation the home producer must pay, and which the importer escapes. A duty of 5 % on imports would seem on both grounds to be no more than an adjustment of charges. The same arguments apply to dairy produce, with the additional one that sanitary regulations enforced here are almost unknown abroad.

REV. E. ST. JOHN, BISHOP'S HOUSE, SOUTHWARK, S.E.

At present it does not pay to sell live cattle on account of the quantity of live cattle sold in England as English meat.

T. CROCKETT, MONESS BIUL, LONDONDERRY ; Farmer.

The meat of cattle that have been landed alive is often exposed for sale and sold as best English or Scotch beef, which is most unfair to home feeders ; such a thing could not be done with meat that had been frozen.

FREDERIC SMITH, LODDINGTON, MAIDSTONE ; Farmer.

Much of the dead meat is sold as English, and should be distinguishable in some way if possible.

J. MACKESSACK, KINLOSS, FORBES, ELGIN ; Farmer.

All meat should come in as dead meat, and be sold as from the country of production. There is at present a good deal of meat killed in Liverpool, Deptford, &c., sold as prime Scotch.

G. A. WOODGATE, LEINTHALL, LUDLOW, HEREFORDSHIRE ; Farmer.

Foreign killed in Birkenhead is sold as English.

1998

1999

2000

(L⁴) SUGGESTED REDUCTION OF FOREIGN TARIFFS.

QUESTION 8 (FORM I.) :—*What amount of reduction of the tariff of any country would enable you to compete successfully within that country with commodities made therein similar to those you manufacture?*

HENRY LEAKE & SON, LTD., KING'S LYNN OIL MILLS, KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK ; Seed Crushers.

Previous to the revision of the German tariff, the whole of our make of oil was exported to that country : we have now entirely lost that outlet, as enormous mills have been fostered there by the said tariff advantages. We not only have lost the output for our oil, but are flooded with cakes from Germany, the consequence being that, whilst the crushing trade has largely extended in foreign countries, it has been a non-progressive trade in this. The present German duty on linseed oil is 48s. a ton. We think if it were reduced to 20s., and a small duty put upon their cakes, that the crushing trade in this country would soon be doubled.

W. JOHNSTONE, CORN EXCHANGE, 81, HOPE STREET, GLASGOW ; Grain Merchant.

There has been a great loss to the agricultural community from the increased tariff levied by America in recent years on potatoes. Some years ago—before the Dingley and McKinley bills came into operation—vast quantities of potatoes were shipped in some seasons to America. At that time the duty was about 23s. per ton. Now it is about 38s. 6d. per ton, which duty was more than the whole price to the farmer last year in the Scotch provincial markets. In spite of this duty some potatoes were exported to America last year. The existing high duty levied on potatoes entering America is a serious injury to British agriculture, and by its operation the Americans, in my opinion, artificially lower the price of potatoes in British markets below the natural price. The abrogation of the American tariff on potatoes would also be an immense boon to Ireland and would be an important factor in restoring prosperity to Irish agriculture. The American tariff on wool operates against British and Irish agriculture and sheep breeding in a similar way. In consequence of the present state of matters, much arable land has been laid down in permanent pasture in Fifeshire and elsewhere. My own farm is a case in point—the whole area of excellent arable land being now in pasture. After 30 years' experience as an importer on a large scale in the Glasgow corn trade, I have become convinced that our present system of free imports without regard to reciprocity is thoroughly unsound and highly injurious to the interests of this country. In the light of the policy now adopted by our great industrial rivals, I consider a continuance of our present fiscal policy will prove very injurious to the interests of this country. It seems to me that the nation as a whole should be armed with the power of bargaining or retaliation possessed by every individual trader when he finds himself unfairly treated by any one with whom he is dealing. We have still the power to compel fair terms as an united Empire, and we cannot use it too soon. It is an axiom of free trade that the foreign competing produce should bear the same taxation as is borne by the home product, and that retaliation is a proper weapon to compel fair play. I therefore claim to be an orthodox free trader in advocating fiscal reform.

FORM No. 10,449. Seedsmen.

If not for the heavy duties on seeds in the U.S. the trade would be more than doubled. They are also now forcing dealers to pay duty on value at time of invoices if higher than price bought at, and as some seeds are arranged for before the seed from which they are to be grown is sown—subject to a given quantity of land producing the quantity ordered—they can frequently be bought at half the price they would command at the time they are invoiced. Consequently the advantage of these orders is being taken away, and trade is falling off. In other countries all things being equal, we could do a much larger trade, as no country could compete with us in the prices of most seeds. In the mangel seed trade in France from the moment a prohibitive duty of 30f. per 100 kilos. (equal to about 50 % on value) was imposed on this article, we practically lost all our trade.

COOPER, TABER & Co., LTD., 90 & 92, SOUTHWARK STREET, LONDON, S.E. ; Seedsmen.

If duties were taken off, we should do a much larger trade. Peas are not so much affected by the export duty, but if a duty was put on all peas coming into this country, including peas for food, the British farmer would be greatly benefited, and would be able to considerably increase his acreage at remunerative prices, and without affecting the retail prices. In addition to this, it would find employment in the winter for a large number of women and girls in the country districts, sorting these peas. France with advantage might be threatened with a duty on all seeds coming from there, if their duty was not taken off peas, an article that practically cannot be grown there for seed on account of insects.

FROST & Co., 181, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, London, E.C. ; Merchants.

A moderate tariff seems to have little or no effect in restricting importations, but an increase in a tariff which is already high undoubtedly checks imports.

J. W. FISK, BRIGHTSTONE, ISLE OF WIGHT ; Miller and Farmer.

Flour : U.S.A., 2s. per cwt., not less.

E. STRATTON, GARS DON MILL, MALMESBURY ; Miller.

Flour : America, 2s. per bag of 280 lbs.

FORM No. 2,701. Manufacturers of Indian Corn (Maize) Starch.

Tariff on maize starch in U.S.A. is 1½ cents per lb. We have no chance of doing business with United States even if the full tariff were taken off, because they have the maize on the spot, and we would require to import it. Tariff on British gum, U.S.A., (present tariff) 2 cents. Our exportation of British gums to the United States has suffered very much ; formerly we exported a good quantity, the duty then being 1 cent per lb., the McKinley tariff raised it to 1½ cents, then the Dingley tariff raised it to its present rate of 2 cents per lb. (£9 6s. 8d. per ton).

2005

F. NEAME, THE OFFICES, MACKNADÉ, FAVERSHAM; Hop Grower and Farmer.

The exportation to foreign markets is greatly restricted by prohibitive tariffs, and in the case of the United States is rendered almost impracticable. The high tariff of foreign countries (with the exception of Belgium) against English hops effectually prevents export trade; the little we export is principally to the Colonies. Hops: Present tariff—U.S.A., £2 16s.; Russia, £1 14s. 6d.; France, 12s. 2d.; Germany, 10s. per cwt. Full amount of the present tariff should be taken off, or a corresponding duty put upon hops brought from the respective countries into this. Taking an average of 10 cwt. per acre, a tariff of 10s. per cwt. is equal to a tax of £5 upon every acre of hops exported from this country to Germany. That is, the German grower has an advantage over us for the hops that he exports to this country of £5 per acre beyond what we have in sending to him. In the case of the U.S.A. the advantage represents £28 per acre. Thus it is very evident that our trade cannot stand against theirs.

FORM No. 2,841. Rice Starch Manufacturers.

The increase of the import duties imposed by Russia, Spain and France has diminished our export trade with them to the extent of 75 %. Nothing short of free trade, pure and simple, because, as the foreigners can, in consequence of lower wages, lower rents, rates and taxes, &c., produce at less cost than we can, we require our goods to enter free to compete at all successfully.

FORM No. 3,652. Seed Crusher.

Linseed oil: U.S.A., Germany and Russia. The duty has been recently increased in Germany. All the duty taken off, or an equivalent duty put upon their cake, would make competition even either way. Even then the Germans would beat us in their reduced labour account. The heavy duty of £2 per ton on potatoes in the U.S.A. has prevented us from competing in that market.

W. GRAY & SONS, LTD., 35, HIGH STREET, HULL; Cotton Seed Crushers.

Hostile tariffs have practically extinguished the export of linseed oil. Countries which once obtained supplies from England are now exporting to us. The effect would make mere reductions of foreign tariffs uncertain in their benefit to our trade.

FORM No. 3,777. Cider Merchants, &c.

The Australian tariff has had the effect of excluding cider *in toto*. Our agents at Melbourne inform us this is due to a desire to promote the production of cider in Australia. We could meet any competition if the tariff did not make cider so dear that the middle class cannot afford it. Any duty above 6d. per gallon must have this result.

CHAS. & THOS. HARRIS & Co., LTD., CALNE, WILTS.; Bacon Curers.

The French and American tariffs have always prevented large business; trade with European countries seems impossible, owing doubtless to the protective duties. French duty on bacon and hams, 10s. per cwt.; German, 10s. per cwt., and United States, 23s. 4d. per cwt. Abolition of tariffs would undoubtedly lead to increased business; but English and Irish bacon and hams being so vastly superior to foreign productions, they are used for a distinct class of trade.

FORM No. 12,999.

The exporting of agricultural produce, such as potatoes, is quite prohibitive except when there is a scarcity in America, and at the same time a large crop here at low prices; then we can export them. But for the duty a pretty regular trade could be done between the two countries. 20s. per ton off potatoes would enable us to compete successfully.

MILNE & MACDONALD, LOCKERBIE; Grain Merchants, Agricultural Machinery Merchants.

Our sales are mostly for the home trade unless, when the prices are high in America, through a failure in their potato crop, we then export potatoes. But unless there is a failure and a high price is obtainable we cannot export as the duty there is quite prohibitive. In 1888 the duty equalled the cost price of the article here. Exporting potatoes and seed grain can only be done when the prices are very low here and a failure in America. In 1888, 1889, 1900 and 1902 we exported largely, and in one of those years the cost of the article here was 20s. a ton. But for the duty potatoes could be exported every year. A reduction of 20s. off U.S.A. tariff would be required to enable us to compete.

WALTER BROWN & SONS, CENTRAL FLOUR MILLS, BIRMINGHAM; Flour Millers.

The large seaport mills would be able to export some grades of flour to foreign countries, if they were free from tariffs.

FORM No. 4,970. Seed Crusher.

Export trade for oils has suffered greatly, and in fact, since Germany put on import duty, has ceased entirely. The duties in the following countries are excessive and should all be removed:—U.S.A., Russia, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Egypt, &c.

FORM No. 4,487. Flour Millers.

Our trade is injured only to a certain extent with the Continent where there is a very high duty against all foreign flours. The reduction would have to be considerable to enable us to compete.

2006

2007

2008

The rise in tariff of Brazil and other South American countries lessened our trade. The high tariff on bacon and hams of the late South African Republic stopped business; the duty in 1902-3 in the Australian Commonwealth lessened our trade there, New South Wales in particular (formerly free), fell off 50 %; the recent tariff (French) in Madagascar, has almost stopped our business there. Since U.S.A. acquired the Philippines and Port Rico, our trade with them has almost disappeared. To enable us to compete the following reductions in tariff would be required:—Bacon and hams -Australia (present tariff 2d. per lb.) ; 1d. or more. S. Africa (present tariff 2d. per lb.); 1d. or more. Madagascar, 50 %; S. American Countries, 50 %; Philippines, 50 %.

W. GRAHAM & Co., HEADLEY OIL MILLS, GREENWICH, S.E. ; Oil Cake Manufacturers.

Our export of oil to Germany has ceased since the imposition of the present duty there. Before, a very large percentage of the quantity we made went there. The German tariff is about £2 5s. per ton; U.S.A., about 25 %. If these duties were taken off we could undersell both countries and probably get the whole trade.

CHAS. A. HODSON, HUNSTON, CHICHESTER, SUSSEX ; Miller.

All trades have suffered through tariffs. To enable us to compete all must be reduced.

KEMP, WALKER & Co., CITY CORN MILLS, ABERDEEN ; Millers.

If the duties on oatmeal and pearl barleys in Germany were taken off we could compete with them in their own country.

R. WILSON, JOHNSTONE & Co., LTD., ADELPHI STARCH WORKS, PAISLEY ; Starch Manufacturers.

A reduction of 100 % on the U.S. tariff on maize starch would be required to enable us to compete.

HILLIER'S BACON CURING Co., LTD., NEWMARKET, NEAR STROUD ; Bacon Curers, &c.

A good trade could be done with the U.S.A. in finest Wiltshire bacon were the import duties abolished. At present they are simply prohibitive.

OSGOOD H. MACKENZIE, INVEREWE HOUSE, POOLEWE, SCOTLAND ; Landed Proprietor.

Blackfaced wool is my chief product, but sheep farming in the Highlands has been ruined by the U.S.A. tariff. U.S.A. used to be the best market for blackfaced wool, but to encourage sheep farming in the States they have put a prohibitive import duty on British wool, so that our best market is closed to us. The Russian duty of, I think, 8s. a barrel on salt herrings is very damaging to the fishermen of this parish.

W. H. & H. LE MAY, 67, BOROUGH HIGH STREET, LONDON, S.E. ; Hop Merchants.

We export hops to the British Colonies. The import duties of foreign States practically shut out British hops, especially U.S.A., where the duty is 56s. per cwt. The average annual importation in United Kingdom of hops from the U.S.A. is 100,000 cwt.

FORM No. 10,099. Provision Merchant.

As the U.S.A. grant a rebate quite equivalent to the salt used in curing on all meats, the tariff has no effect on salt for curing purposes, which is what we export. American salt is not pure enough to cure high-class meats, so cannot compete.

G. B. WILLS & Co., 3, CHAPEL STREET, LONDON, E.C. ; Manufacturers and Importers of Produce, &c.

We do not know of any loss through tariffs abroad. The bulk of our imports into foreign countries consists of raw material, such as ore, wool, &c. We have experienced some loss of market in Australia, owing to the raising of duties on same classes of goods under the Federal tariff as compared with the old Colonial tariff. The Australian tariff tends to hamper our produce trade from Australia. The cost of production of all the natural products of Australia is raised by the high price of agricultural machinery and most other articles required by the producers. Our imports into foreign countries are mainly in goods not subject to duties. Fully manufactured goods have relatively decreased owing to the high Australian tariff, and the consequent growth of local factories. To counteract this tendency a reduction of duties would be necessary. It would be practically useless to merely increase the duties against foreigners, as is suggested.

FORM No. 2,758. Millers.

In Australia the duty charged keeps out British goods; for example, our price of oatmeal in kegs, 15s. 9d. f.o.b. per 112 lbs., freight 3s., duty 4s. 8d. = 23s. 5d. Price of Australian, 19s. 6d. Sweden, very little trade and custom duty high; Russia, no demand owing to heavy duties; New Zealand, as Australia; Germany, no business, duty too heavy; Portugal, small business, but duty, Consul's fees, &c., make it difficult.

W. GAYMER & SON, ATTLEBOROUGH, NORFOLK ; Apple Growers and Cider Makers.

Up to 1898 we had a considerable and increasing trade with South Africa; in that year President Kruger put on a duty of 12s. per gallon, which ruined the trade for a time. Now, under the Customs Union, the duty is 1s. 8d. per gallon, and 7½ % ad valorem, which is too high to allow us to develop.

FORM No. 2,098. Margarine Manufacturers.

What we require is the same selling conditions in foreign countries as the makers in these countries have. Of course, makers in this country would still have the disadvantage of freight.

SECTION VI.—MEMORANDA.

2013

(A) THE POSSIBILITIES OF SUGAR MANUFACTURE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

BY THE EARL OF DENBIGH.

As I explained in a Memorandum addressed to the President of the Board of Agriculture in the late Ministry, the cultivation of beet sugar has been carried on in the United Kingdom on an experimental scale for some years, and the results of the analyses of the roots have been carefully tabulated and published from time to time by competent and well-known analysts.

British Sugar
Beet Cultivation

These results have conclusively proved that in almost every part of Great Britain and Ireland, and on varying soils, sugar beet can be grown of a quality, if anything, superior to the best beet grown in the Magdeburg district of Germany, so far as purity and percentage of saccharine contents of the roots are concerned. It is admitted by everyone that, if the cultivation of beet for sugar purposes can be made a success on a commercial scale, it would very soon develop into an important agricultural industry, provide a new and profitable crop for farmers, and be of great benefit to many of our country districts. Hitherto, however, beet has not been grown on a commercial scale, because there was no market for it, and sugar factories have not been erected because no beet was grown, and the existence of the foreign bounty system was sufficient to prevent capitalists from risking their money.

2014

The sugar beet industry on the Continent has, as is well known, attained enormous proportions. Last year 7,000,000 tons of sugar were produced in Europe, from which it may be inferred that 50,000,000 tons of sugar beet were grown. As about 12 tons were grown to the acre, no less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ million acres must have been under sugar beet last year in Europe. Sugar beet requires good and deep cultivation, suitable manuring and careful weeding, and this naturally increases the fertility of the land and the yield of succeeding crops. It is generally grown on a 3- or 4-course system, and it follows therefore that about 20,000,000 acres on the Continent of Europe are deriving great benefit from its cultivation. Moreover, the "slices" from which the sugar has been pressed form most valuable food for cattle, and the lime used in the sugar manufacture is an excellent fertiliser, so much so that in sugar districts the head of cattle and the yield of wheat and other crops have wonderfully increased.

Continental
Industry

Also as the factories work during the winter months when agricultural work is slack, the employment provided is a boon to the local population and tends to keep it "on the land." In Germany some 100,000 men are employed in the factories during the winter when no other work is available. Then, again, the establishment of sugar factories creates a demand for machinery, and provides employment in many different ways. In the words of that well-known authority, Mr. George Martineau: "One successful factory will show the way to hundreds more, and we shall again hold up our heads as agriculturists with a real home industry. To make machinery for such an industry will require another new departure. The growing of the roots, we shall soon discover, will give us new ideas of farming and new energies on the land. Crops all round will multiply, the railways and canals will discover new employment, and the labourer will go back to the land. This is a dream, but it can be made a reality."

Benefit to
Labour

2015

The Brussels Convention did away with sugar bounties on the Continent, and thus for the first time in the last 35 years there is a prospect of this important industry being developed in the United Kingdom if capitalists can be made to see that Government will give them encouragement, and if they see a reasonable chance of a good return on their investment. The ordinary British agriculturist being as a rule of very conservative habits in agriculture, it might take some time to establish a sugar industry, more especially as it is well known that a factory established some 40 years ago at Lavenham had, after running successfully, to be ultimately abandoned owing to the foreign bounties. As great improvements have taken place both in sugar-producing methods and machinery, and in the saccharine properties of the roots now grown, there would seem to be no reason why a factory should now be a failure if properly organised and managed, and if the price of the finished product is sufficiently good to allow of a remunerative price being paid to the growers of the roots.

The Brussels
Convention

2016

The latter point is practically the crux of the whole situation, for, owing to the way labour has left many of the country districts, there will no doubt be difficulties at first, until it can be conclusively shown to the agricultural population that good wages and a good profit can be obtained by growing sugar beet and selling it to factories for sugar purposes.

It is therefore of the very greatest importance that the first effort to establish this industry should meet with success.

To make a start it may be necessary to get from £60,000 to £70,000 subscribed or guaranteed, as, to treat the sugar economically, it would be necessary to put up a factory capable of handling

Initiation of the
Industry

2017

from 30,000 to 40,000 tons of beet per annum. Taking the average crop at about 13 tons per acre, this would require about 3,000 acres under beet annually, and at a convenient distance from the factory.

This money having been guaranteed, it would be necessary to select a suitable centre and make definite contracts with surrounding farmers to grow beet for five or ten years at prices which would be good enough to tempt agriculturists to make this new departure, and then proceed to erect a factory with its necessary accompanying organisations.

It is most important that the best possible site should be chosen for the first experiment—good soil, water frontage, cheap coal, ample supply of good water, good communications, &c.—so that there should be as little chance of failure as possible.

Farmers will not grow the sugar beet unless they can get a good price—say 18s. to 19s. per ton—but at this price it should return a fair profit, and if a factory on these lines could be kept going it would be a magnificent thing for the neighbourhood.

2018

The Present Position

The position therefore is at present as follows :—

It is claimed that sugar beet can be grown in Great Britain and Ireland of as good a quality as on the Continent.

It is believed that money to establish an industry would be forthcoming if the prospects of a satisfactory profit were sufficiently good.

When the sugar import duties were imposed, no power was taken with regard to excise duties, as there was then no sugar produced in this country.

By the Brussels Convention, in a sugar-producing country, the surtax, that is, the difference between the excise and import duties, must not be more than 2s. 6d. per cwt.

The present import duty being 4s. 2d. per cwt., those who wish to make the experiment of a sugar factory wish to have an assurance that if an excise duty is imposed, it will not, at all events for a term of years, amount to more than 1s. 8d. per cwt., which would make the surtax 2s. 6d. per cwt., the maximum amount allowed by the Convention, thus giving home-grown sugar a temporary advantage of 2s. 6d. per cwt. over imported sugar.

2019

It is submitted that, in consequence of the present low price of sugar, the prospects of profits, if an excise duty of 4s. 2d. is to be charged, are not sufficiently attractive to make it worth anybody's while to start an industry which will very likely have to run at a loss for some time until agriculturists learn how to get the best results in beet growing. It is also submitted that, as there is at present a tax on sugar, the proposal made herein would not be open to the objection that it would raise the price of sugar, for if successful, the establishment of a home-grown sugar industry would tend, if anything, to lower the prices.

Attitude of the Treasury

The position of the Treasury is explained by a letter from the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, dated December 20th, 1904, in which he said :—

“ You are aware from our previous conversation, that if Beet Sugar were largely produced in this country, our International obligations would oblige us to impose such an Excise as would reduce the difference between this duty paid by Home-grown and that paid by imported Sugar to the limit fixed by the Brussels Convention ; but you ask me whether His Majesty's Government can give you a guarantee that the Excise on Home-grown Sugar shall not exceed what is necessary for this purpose.

“ I fear it is not possible for us to give you such an undertaking. I fully appreciate the great advantage to Agriculture which would follow the introduction into this country of a new and lucrative industry, whilst the circumstances of the moment show how very desirable it is that the sources of our sugar supply should be extended, and that we should in future be less dependent than we are now upon the continental crops. I can quite understand also, that, as you explain, heavy initial capital expenditure is required to start the new industry on a profitable basis, and that, however good the ultimate prospects are, it may be a year or two before the enterprise could show any return to investors. This may indeed be one of the cases in which the natural course of industry would ultimately be helped, not hindered, by aid given in the initial stages of a new manufacture. On this aspect of the question I have not information which would enable me to offer an opinion. But, whatever view we take on this point, it cannot be denied that such a pledge as you ask for would be a great departure from the Fiscal Policy which has prevailed in this country for the last sixty years, and His Majesty's Government are precluded from making such a change during the present Parliament by the pledges which they have given to the country.”

2020

Realising that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer was bound by pledges which prevented any variation whatever from the fiscal system in force, and that the present Government, though elected on free trade principles, might be disposed to permit of a temporary relaxation of them if conclusively shown that it would be for the good of the country, I brought the matter before the House of Lords in a debate on April 2nd, of this year.

The Suggested
Rebate of Excise

2021

It was very apparent that none of the present Government had in any way considered the possibilities or the effects of a successful home sugar industry, and it was disappointing to find that they absolutely refused to give any promise of a temporary rebate of excise duty, and solely on the ground that such a rebate would be a violation of free trade principles.

The cost of manufacturing raw sugar is about 8s. 6d. per cwt. on the Continent, and a few months ago, owing to large stocks on hand, the selling price, f.o.b. Hamburg, was below this figure.

No important commodity can, however, remain permanently below cost price, and the selling price has lately risen considerably, but is now at about 9s., which the trade experts consider will, under ordinary conditions, be near the figure of its normal price.

This figure enables Continental manufacturers to make good profits, but they have a great initial advantage over us through their organisation of railway rates and labour conditions. These are the results of many years work, and as the margin of profit, even for foreigners, is not a large one, a new sugar industry in England would be greatly handicapped at the start and could not be expected to show much profit until local experience had been gained and all the complicated details of organisation had got into working order.

2022

If we could only get a rebate of excise for a term of years it is certain that investors would come forward readily and enable a start to be made.

Of course if the Chancellor of the Exchequer removed the sugar duty this advantage would be wiped out. No Chancellor, however, likes to give up £6,000,000 of revenue. The duty at present is 4s. 2d. per cwt. Under the Convention an excise of 1s. 8d. must be charged, as a larger surtax than 2s. 6d. is not allowed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he wanted to reduce the duties, might knock off the 1s. 8d. without doing any harm, and if he could be induced to keep the 2s. 6d. duty on for a term of years it would do no harm to anybody.

There is another serious obstacle to the success of beet sugar manufacture and this is the possible denunciation by the Government of the Brussels Convention, and consequent return to bounties and trusts or "kartells" in Germany and Austria where the sugar interests are very powerful. What is required is for the Government to state, that without pledging themselves to a renewal of the Convention in its present form, they will, when the time comes, consent to no alteration that will have the effect of making a return to the bounty system possible.

Effect of a
Denunciation of
the Brussels
Convention

2023

(B) SUGAR BEET CULTIVATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

ABSTRACT OF MEMORANDUM BY MR. SIGMUND STEIN, LIVERPOOL.

The results of the experimental cultivation of sugar beet in the United Kingdom improve yearly, every variety of soil and manure and seed having been tried. The period of growth has varied from 133 to 190 days and the average yield of roots per acre has reached 16 tons in 1905.

Experimental
Cultivation

The following table shows a comparison between British-grown roots with those grown by Mr. Licht of Magdeburg:—

Comparison with
German Cultivation

2024

ROOTS GROWN IN 1905.						BRITISH.	GERMAN.
Average weight of roots with leaves	..	..	..	..	..	1,611 grammes	927 grammes
" " " without "	..	..	..	..	..	996 "	495 "
Degree brix (dry matter)	..	..	..	..	..	20.13	19.30
Specific gravity	..	..	..	..	..	1.084	1.080
Sugar in 100 parts juice	..	..	..	..	..	17.50	17.00
Non-sugar in 100 parts juice	..	..	..	..	..	2.63	2.30
Quotient of purity	..	..	..	..	..	87.30	88.08
Sugar in 100 parts root	..	..	..	..	..	15.93	15.10

The above table shows that roots larger and richer in sugar than those of the Continent can be grown in the United Kingdom, i.e., more sugar per acre. Analyses of Essex-grown roots have given still higher figures.

2025

In 1905 the average ratio of juice to pulp was 93·82 . 6·18. The average yield on the Continent is 12 to 13 tons per acre. The yield of experimental crops in the United Kingdom from 1897 to 1905, both inclusive, has averaged 16·07, 16·03, 16·09, 19·01, 19·04, 15·90, 14·50, 16·86, 16·00. In or about 1905 38 experiments were carried out in the United Kingdom: 12 in England and 26 in Scotland.

The apathy of former years as to the cultivation of beet in England has given place to enthusiasm, and farmers and local authorities are showing great interest.

Answers to Objections

The arguments against beet cultivation in the United Kingdom may be conveniently arranged and met under the following heads:—

- (1) *Yield per acre.* Opponents say that this has been exaggerated, but such is not the case
- (2) *Percentage of sugar.*—This is said to have been exaggerated, but the analyses have been fully verified.
- (3) *Cost of cultivation.*—This is said to have been understated, but such has not been the case in the past, and the table below showing cost per acre (according to the latest estimates from experiments) brings it even lower than before.

2026

Cost of Cultivation

COST OF GROWING SUGAR BEET PER ACRE.

	£	s.	d.
Rent and taxes	1	0	0
Clearing and forking weed stubble	0	1	0
Ten loads farmyard manure	1	5	6
Carting ten loads fresh manure	0	5	6
Spreading manure	0	1	0
Ploughing 8 in. to 10 in. deep	0	8	0
Cultivating, including harrowing and rolling	0	6	0
Artificial manure	1	10	0
Sowing	0	2	6
Seed (20 lbs. at 4d.)	0	6	8
Drilling	0	1	0
Hoeing and thinning	0	10	0
Harvesting crop	0	10	0
Carting to factory 15 tons, 3 miles at 6d. per ton per mile and 3d. per ton labour	1	6	3
	<u>£7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>5</u>

2027

BALANCE-SHEET OF THE BEET-GROWING FARMER.

<i>Dr.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Cr.</i>	£	s.	d.
Cost per acre to plant, cultivate and deliver roots	7	15	0	Roots, 15 tons at 18s.	13	10	0
Other carting charges for 15 tons of roots	1	10	0	Value of 5 tons leaves and heads from roots	1	5	0
Balance per acre	7	4	7	3 tons slices (20 per cent. of quantity delivered) at 10s.	1	10	0
				Value, saturation lime (free from factory)	0	5	0
Total	£16	10	0	Total	£16	10	0

2028

Even if you take the expenses at £10 per acre it would leave a very handsome profit for the farmer. Regarding the different amount and loads of manure, viz., 12, 14, 20, &c., loads, I must say I left it to the farmer to put any quantity on as he pleased. The manure in most cases is rather excessive. My figures for manure give the *normal* quantity which should be used, and gives as well the *normal* monetary value. I am constantly hearing from farmer friends that the figures I have given regarding the cultivation are correct.

- (4) *Labour* of the kind required could easily be obtained in plenty in England at no higher rate of wages than on the Continent.
- (5) *Climatic conditions* have been urged as a reason against growing sugar beet in England, but the results of experiments show this to be unfounded.

2029

(6) *The price of sugar* is said to be too low at present for the profitable starting of the beet industry in England, but present prices are utterly abnormal and the market will correct itself.

(7) *Cost of manufacturing sugar from beet.*—England possesses the following advantages : (a) the largest consumption of sugar per capita in the world ; (b) freight and commission saved ; (c) the very latest machinery can be used ; (d) better opportunity than on the Continent for the use of the factory plant in summer.

(8) *Sugar Bounties.*—The Brussels Convention has placed England on the same footing as the Continent.

As to the capital required for working a factory, I think that £60,000 would suffice, but £80,000 would be much better. Basing my calculation on a capital of £80,000, I distribute it as follows :—

	£
Machinery	30,000
Buildings	8,000
Working Capital	42,000
	80,000

2030

BALANCE SHEET OF A YEAR'S WORKING OF A BEET SUGAR WORKS.

Dr.	£	Cr.	£
Cost of roots, including expenses of manufacture, 25,000 tons at 25s.	31,250	3,000 tons refined sugar produced at 13s. per cwt. (in bond) ..	39,000
5 per cent. depreciation	1,500	2 per cent. (500 tons) of yellow sugar at 11s. 6d. per cwt. (in bond)	5,750
Gross profit	17,500	2 per cent. molasses (500 tons) at £3 10s. per ton	1,750
		30 per cent. slices (7,500 tons) at 10s. per ton.. .. .	3,750
	£50,250		£50,250

2031

Allowing £1,500 for extra expenses, &c., there remains £16,000, or 20 per cent. on a capital of £80,000.

Deputations of Suffolk and Lincolnshire farmers have twice accompanied me to the Continent and have gone most minutely into every detail of beet cultivation. These and other official deputations sent for the same purpose have confirmed the accuracy of the figures given.

(C) TOBACCO CULTIVATION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

A high agricultural authority who prefers that his name should not be disclosed communicates the following note on Tobacco Cultivation in the United Kingdom :—

“ It is illegal to grow tobacco at all in England,* that is, more than a few plants in a garden. About six years ago or so, certain farmers in East Kent approached the Board of Agriculture through the Principal of the Wye Agricultural College, to ask for permission to grow a small area, 2-4 acres, of tobacco experimentally. No rebate of excise was asked for, merely permission to grow, duty to be duly paid on the crops. After some correspondence, the Board declined to approach the Inland

Possibilities of
English growth

2032

* In October, 1906, a correspondent who had inquired of the Board of Agriculture whether the Government would encourage home farmers to carry out experiments in tobacco-growing, in view of the success attending the experiments begun on Lord Walsingham's home farm 20 years ago, received the following reply :—

“ I am directed by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to advert to your letter of the 17th ult., and to say that the cultivation of tobacco in this country is prohibited for revenue purposes, but that in 1886-1890 experiments were conducted in many parts of England by permission of Her Majesty's Treasury for the purpose of ascertaining whether marketable tobacco could be grown.

“ In a few cases the experiment was apparently successful, but in by far the greater number it was a complete failure, and, inasmuch, as the reports of the expert advisers went to show that the plant could never be cultivated in this country so as to compete successfully with tobacco grown in warmer climates, the permission was withdrawn and has not since been renewed.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

“ T. H. ELLIOTT, Secretary.”

2033

Revenue authorities for the necessary permit, alleging that the experiment had been made and failed a few years previously. The experiment referred to had been a single plot only, and under unfavourable conditions, about 1894. So it was not possible to go further, and as there was some question whether the farmers concerned had the money or knowledge to carry the trials through to a real success, the matter was not followed up. A year or two later the Irish Board of Agriculture obtained the necessary permission to begin experiments in Ireland. Judging by Continental results, tobacco should be much more successful in the warm, dry soils of the south-east of England than in Ireland."

Official Statements
in 1906

In the House of Lords on July 17th, 1906, Lord Denman, representing the Government, said in reply to Lord Oranmore and Browne:—

2034

"The late Government in December, 1903, decided to aid the experimental growth of tobacco in Ireland by granting for a period of five years a rebate of one-third of the current rates of duty for imported manufactured tobacco on crops on certain areas specially selected by the Irish Board of Agriculture. At the beginning of this year representations were made to His Majesty's Government that the period—five years—allowed by the late Government was not sufficiently long to enable the experiment to be thoroughly carried out. Therefore, His Majesty's Government decided to extend the period for which they were prepared to grant a rebate of duty for another five years, that was to say, the rebate would continue, so far as the Government could say, until the year 1913. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a letter to Mr. William Redmond, informed him that the object of the extension, as of the original grant of the rebate, was merely to demonstrate the possibility of tobacco growing in Ireland as a commercial proposition, but not the establishment of a protected industry, and it would, of course, be necessary to continue the rules whereby tobacco cultivation would be continued within a certain limited approved area."

Mr. Bryce, the Secretary for Ireland, stated in the House of Commons, on November 1st, 1906, that during the season of 1906 tobacco was grown on 77½ acres of land in Ireland by persons who were granted the necessary authority by the Board of Inland Revenue. Mr. Bryce added:—"Applications were also received from other persons, but inasmuch as the original concessions were granted solely for experimental purposes, and as the area already under cultivation was adequate for this purpose, His Majesty's Government did not see their way to accede to them."

2035

(D) THE PURCHASE OF LAND (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

By Mr. J. L. GREEN, SECRETARY OF THE RURAL LABOURERS' LEAGUE.

The Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill, to which I desire to draw attention, has been brought into Parliament by Mr. Jesse Collings, and is backed by Colonel Kenyon Slaney, Sir John Kennaway, Colonel Lockwood, Sir Carne Rasch, and Mr. Herbert Roberts.

Tenants become
Owners

The First Part enables a tenant to acquire the freehold of the farm he rents. When a landlord and tenant agree for the sale of a farm, and on the price to be paid for the same, the Board of Agriculture may, after making due inquiries, advance to the tenant the whole of the purchase money. The repayment of the advance is to be made by annual instalments made up of 2½ per cent. interest, and ½ per cent. sinking fund; so that the farmer would have to pay a total of 3¼ per cent. a year on the purchase money, for a certain number of years, till the amount advanced is repaid, when all further payments cease.

2036

As soon as the agreement referred to is completed, the tenant becomes immediately the owner of the farm, subject to the payment of the annual instalments. The only other conditions of importance are those contained in Clauses 11 and 12, by which *sub-division* and *sub-letting are forbidden* (except with the consent of the Board of Agriculture), and *restrictions are placed on the power of mortgaging*.

The sum to be advanced for the purpose of this part of the Bill is limited to ten millions sterling.

Peasant Proprietors

The Second Part of the Bill enables the Board of Agriculture to purchase any land they may deem suitable for the purpose of providing small holdings, for persons who desire to buy and who will themselves cultivate such holdings. Each holding is not to be less than 3 acres or more than 100 acres.

The Board can adapt the land so acquired by dividing and fencing it and doing all else necessary to make each holding complete in itself. The Board may erect on each holding a cottage and such other buildings as are necessary for the occupation of the holding. The Board may advance to

2037

the purchaser of a small holding any sum not exceeding nine-tenths of the cost ; but in the case of a man who is suitable as to character and as a cultivator, but who has not the money (one-tenth) to pay down, the Board may advance the whole of the purchase money.

The terms of repayment of the money advanced are by annual instalments at the same rates as those named in the First Part of the Bill.

The Bill is a measure to restore in England the classes which were formerly so valuable in agriculture and in social life, namely, the Yeomen and Peasant Proprietors.

The Bill has been approved by the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture and by local Chambers of Agriculture. I am also able to add from much other evidence that it is even much more widely approved. For example, I recently sent a letter to a number of provincial papers in various parts of the country and received a large number of responses thereto, which in every case were favourable to the measure, these responses being from farmers, labourers, and owners. Further, during the past summer and right up to the time of writing this, the agents of the Rural Labourers' League have held and are holding a large number of public meetings in villages and small market towns, at which gatherings the Bill has been and is being explained. Without exception, so far, it has been hailed with the greatest possible satisfaction by labourers, farmers and others present, the testimony, in fact, from this source has been most gratifying and extraordinary. Moreover, the Departmental Committee appointed by the Board of Agriculture to enquire into and report upon the Fruit Industry of Great Britain, in its Report (Cd. 2589, June 9th, 1905), recommended "that a Bill should be passed for facilitating the purchase of small holdings by tenants, with the assistance from the Public funds, somewhat on the lines of the measure brought in by the Right Hon. Jesse Collings, M.P., in the session of 1904" (see page 37 of the Report) ; although it may here be mentioned that the Bill in question is not confined to cultivators of "small" holdings, but that it also includes cultivators of "larger" holdings. It is as well to bear that fact in mind, as I have come across many who, knowing Mr. Jesse Collings to be an advocate of a peasant proprietary, have assumed therefrom that the Bill was limited to the peasant class. And it may further be said that whilst with regard to the merits or demerits of peasant holdings, it is not necessary here to enquire into that subject, the select Committee on Small Holdings, over which Mr. Chamberlain presided, reported in favour of an increase in the number of small farms. The Legislature itself followed this up by passing the Small Holdings Act of 1892 ; and several successful experiments have since been made in different parts of the country in establishing small holdings. The utility of small holdings may therefore be admitted. It is, in fact, much to be regretted that there are not a much larger number in existence in suitable localities, from which regret, however, it is not to be assumed that larger farmers do not occupy a useful and even necessary place in our farming system.

Approval of the Bill

2038

2039

That the cultivators prefer, where possible, to be owners rather than tenants, my experience in travelling about the rural districts convinces me ; and it is common knowledge that on the Continent ownership enters far more largely than with us into the rural economy of the people. Mr. Collings has, indeed, himself lucidly demonstrated this fact in his recently-published work.* I would only further add on this point that when in Sweden this summer, touring the agricultural districts under the auspices of departmental and other officials of that country, I was informed that it was the policy of Sweden—and now more than ever—to establish freehold cultivators ; whilst, at the show of the Swedish Royal Agricultural Society, 1906, the most suitable type of dwelling and of farm buildings was demonstrated. Particulars of the cost thereof and of the sums available from Government sources to establish such structures were readily available for the use of would-be cultivators and others. I was assured on every hand that economically, socially, and politically the policy of increasing the class of owner-cultivators was approved and was making rapid strides. Of course, the industry of agriculture is protected by tariffs in Sweden as in other Continental countries ; and the policy nationally is profitable or it would not be continued.

Ownership on the Continent

2040

The class of cultivating owners—yeomen and peasantry—formerly existed in this country ; and, although the present is not the occasion upon which to go into the historical reasons for its practical disappearance, it is the fact that it formed a most valuable element in the life of the nation. If it existed to-day on anything like such a scale as formerly, we should, I believe, hear little or nothing of the cry "Back to the land" ; whilst many of those well-founded fears regarding the grave social condition of the people which exercise the minds of reflecting statesmen, social reformers, philanthropists and others would also cease to exist.

Social and Political Value

Lord Roberts has pointed out that our military force a hundred years ago was much greater in numbers than now, and he laments the present-day fact. In those days, however, our villages

* "Land Reform," Longmans & Co.

2041

were comparatively populous; and the plough, as Bacon said, "yieldeth the best souldiers," a sentiment none will dispute. It may be suggested that a reversion to the policy of re-peopling the village with a numerous and busy yeoman and peasant class would do much to satisfy the patriotic aims of his lordship and all those who agree with him and them.

Physical
Deterioration

According to the Report (Cd. 2434, 1905) of the Army Medical Department for 1903, of 69,553 inspected recruits, no less than 321·80 out of every 1,000, or 22,382 altogether, were declared to be unfit for His Majesty's Army, whilst 1,022 of the remainder were also declared as unfit after three months' service. Many of these unfit recruits are the sons or grandsons of those who drifted or were attracted to the towns, thus showing the deteriorating effect of town surroundings after but one or two generations. The evidence, too, given before the Committee dealing with Physical Deterioration, appointed in 1903 by the Duke of Devonshire, is full of appalling information concerning the conditions under which so many thousands of our labouring population are compelled to live; and Sir Lauder Brunton has declared that amongst the first causes of physical deterioration may be placed "the gradual withdrawal of the peasantry from the country and their aggregation in towns." There is plenty of other evidence of a similar authoritative kind, were it necessary here to deal further with the particular point alluded to.

2042

Cost

The sum of money involved in the Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill is sought for the national object of improving an industry which in every State but our own is considered to be and is in fact the backbone of it. Placed by the side of the annual amounts extracted from the ratepayers for the cost of pauperism the sum seems very trivial indeed. For example, in 1881 we spent £8,000,000 on relieving an average number of 790,937 persons, whilst in 1904 we spent over £13,000,000 (the mean number of paupers being 837,680). Of these two items of expenditure a little over £1,000,000 in 1881 was for "salaries and superannuation allowances of Union Officers, etc.," this item increasing to considerably over £2,250,000 in 1904. These and other items are annually incurred in connection with our poor law system. Common sense would seem to suggest that by making some such effort as that contemplated in the Bill under notice economy would be promoted and the nation helped to a sounder social and political position.

The main points of the Purchase of Land Bill, and some special and general considerations, have been given; in concluding this Memorandum, we may usefully consider the objections which on inadequate knowledge have been taken to the Bill in question.

2043

Answers to
Objections

It is stated by some that the terms are too favourable to the buyers, and would involve a risk of public money. As a matter of fact, the terms are exactly the same as those granted by the Irish Land Act, 1903, to Irish cultivators, under which Act the Government has agreed to advance above one hundred millions sterling, and has already advanced about 20 millions. Under the present Bill the sum is limited to 12 millions sterling. There is no good reason why English and Welsh farmers and cultivators should not have this comparatively small share of the advantages so liberally bestowed on the Irish.

It is also stated that the English farmer prefers to be a tenant to being a freeholder. Apart from what has been said on this point, there is, we may mention, nothing compulsory in the Bill; nor is there anything compulsory in the Irish Act. Where a landlord wishes to sell a farm, the tenant, under the Bill, can buy it, if he chooses to do so, with money advanced by the State. Through the superior credit of the State the landlord would receive a fair price for his land; and the farmer would find that the annual instalments would be less (in many cases much less) than the rent he had been previously paying. Besides this, the farmer would be the owner, with all the freedom of ownership. All improvements made would be his own; he could at any time sell his land to another cultivator or he could leave it to those who come after him.

2044

Frequent statements are made that it is better for the tenant to employ his capital in cultivating rather than in purchasing his holding. The obvious answer to this is that he would require no capital to purchase; the capital being advanced—as in the Irish Act—by the State, whilst, in the matter of new buildings or repairs to old ones, tenants too often have to pay interest on the often excessive outlay, the buildings themselves not always being such as they themselves really prefer.

Another objection urged against the Bill is that it contains no clauses for the compulsory acquisition of land. Such clauses are not necessary. Almost every day estates and farms are sold by public auction or private arrangements. In many cases these sales involve great hardships to the sitting tenants, who, having no spare money to buy, see their farms sold over their heads, and are liable to a rise in rents, and other consequences resulting from a change of ownership. The Bill would enable such tenants to buy their farms, and to remain undisturbed.

It is further stated that the Bill would enable landlords to get rid of inferior land, and by collusion with some tenants (who have not themselves to find the money) to get exceptional prices

for their farms. This seems to us a futile objection. No doubt the Board of Agriculture, before advancing money for the purchase of farms or estates would employ local and independent professional men to ascertain their fair value. Under such a procedure as this the public funds would, of course, be amply safeguarded.

It is also asserted that cultivating owners, especially those of the smaller class, would soon get into the hands of the moneylender, and the land become burdened with mortgages. No doubt the moneylender, both at home and abroad is, in most cases, the curse and cause of failure of small ownership—where such failure is found; but under the provisions of the Bill in question no such danger could exist. Neither the yeoman nor the peasant proprietor would offer any temptation to the mortgagee or the moneylender. They would have already borrowed of the State, at the lowest possible interest, the money they require. The money so advanced could not be called in by the State, nor could the low rate of interest be raised. Further, these cultivating owners could, as owners, get credit from merchants and local tradesmen in a manner and to such an extent as they could not hope to do if they had been mere yearly tenants.

A further argument is frequently advanced to the effect that “the State would be a hard landlord,” and that it could not postpone payment of rent in bad times, as private landlords often do, &c. The State, however, would not be a landlord. The men would be their own landlords. The State would be merely the receiver of the annual instalments. The Board of Agriculture would have power to postpone a year’s instalment; and no doubt would do so on good cause being shown, such as a bad season, money spent on improvements, &c.

An objection made is to the effect that a tenant who has security of tenure can desire nothing better. A long agreement or lease is no security that, when the lease runs out and when there may be a new owner, the latter will not raise the rent.

There is another class of objectors who state that there should be no private owners of land but that the State should possess all the land in the kingdom and let the same on favourable terms to farmers and others. There are two ways in which the State could acquire all the land of the Kingdom. One is by confiscation, which is a method too dishonest to be discussed. The other method is by purchase at a cost of hundreds of millions of money, a proceeding which everyone must see no Government is ever likely to adopt. But the practical and common-sense answers to those objectors are:—First, that there can be no tenure so secure as that of ownership, and, secondly, that the present generation, as well as their children and grandchildren will be in their graves before “Land Nationalisation” is brought about. Something should be done immediately; and, if the Bill we are considering were passed, its provisions could be put into operation at once, and there would be both an immediate and a gradual increase in the number of those who own the soil they cultivate. This process, besides greatly increasing the productiveness of the land, would add to the strength and prosperity of the nation.

With regard to the relative merits of tenancy and ownership as they affect the small holder, we cannot do better than examine a couple of practical examples of each form of tenure:—(1) The Worcestershire County Council and the Norfolk County Council have, to their credit, been among the few Local Authorities which have put the Small Holdings Act of 1892 into operation. These authorities have purchased certain areas of land for the purpose of small holdings. The Norfolk Council have adopted the system of tenancy. They charge the tenants such rent as will in 50 years recoup the Council the whole cost of the land together with interest and expenses. Thus the holders, whose rents and labour have enabled the Council to become the possessors of the land free from liability, will themselves remain in the same position as that in which they started—namely, as mere tenants with no proprietary rights in the soil. The Worcestershire Council, on the other hand, have sold the small holdings to the labourers and others; the purchase money (interest and sinking fund) to be re-paid by the holders by yearly instalments extending over a period of 40 years. The advantage of this latter system to the cultivator is evident. The holding is his own. However much he may improve the land by skill and labour, the whole value of the improvement is his own. He can at any time, if he wishes, sell his holding with all its increased value to another cultivator, or, in case of death, leave it for the benefit of his family.

INDEX

Abbreviations used in this Index:—

U.K. = United Kingdom.

U.S.A. = United States of America.

	Paragraph
ABERDEENSHIRE ..	833, 1250, 1356, 1358, 1651
Freight Rates to and from ..	685, 833, 1100, 1464-1465
Oatmeal Prices	1358, 1359
Wheat Growing	1234, 1662
ABERDOUR, FIFE ..	1234
ACTS OF INCLOSURE ..	37-50
ADARE	893
ADULTERATION	1245, 1383, 1388, 1404, 1412
AD VALOREM DUTY ..	965, 1098
AGENTS	852, 940, 1773
AGRICULTURE—See also under Specified Branches.	
Depressed Conditions of ..	10, 12, 18, 52, 115-119, 130, 271, 285, 357-358, 364, 499, 513, 534, 622, 766, 794, 807, 848, 1071, 1158, 1194, 1222, 1485, 1647
Through Fall in Prices ..	513, 519, 544, 610, 656, 701, 774
Duties proposed Beneficial to ..	993, 1548, 1631, 1777, 1784, 1785
AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY ..	577
AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE ..	1-8, 392
AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANKS ..	722, 732-734
AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION ..	245, 978, 989
Abroad	367, 989, 1109
Advantageous	795, 981, 1030, 1127
Begins too late	781, 912, 1445
Facilities good	606, 674, 801, 1079
In Ireland	525, 625-626, 751, 761, 777, 792
Present Methods useless ..	781, 927, 932, 1047, 1144, 1153
Provided by County Councils ..	570, 606, 652, 716, 815, 940, 973, 989, 1072
AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT ..	646
AGRICULTURAL INSPECTORS —See also <i>Inspection</i> ..	907-908
AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY —See also <i>Machinery</i> ..	536, 795, 841, 1240, 1243, 1815, 2011
British Preferred	792, 1240, 1241, 1242, 1243
Co-operative Purchasing of ..	788, 885, 922, 1072, 1196, 1244, 1245, 1246, 1252
Counteracts Labour Scarcity ..	576, 1222, 1235
Effects of Duty on	517, 1157, 1240, 1497, 1503, 1548, 1625, 1645, 1659, 1663
Foreign Preferred	517, 841, 1240, 1243
Prices Compared	1240, 1241, 1243

	Paragraph
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE —See also under Specified Produce.	
Co-operative Selling	728, 885, 902
Duty Suggested	765, 1490, 1535, 1539, 1557, 1765, 1794
Prices	529, 600, 609, 629, 813, 1232-1233, 1592
Transport Rates	361-363, 365, 601, 615, 1161, 1448, 1449, 1451
AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT ..	616, 649, 827, 887, 904, 913, 990
Beneficial	264, 284, 337-358, 368-369, 497, 500, 546, 571, 578, 582, 607, 611, 616, 620, 639, 640, 675, 692, 697, 703, 769, 781, 796, 815, 827, 840, 860, 864, 887, 891, 904, 932, 1017, 1034, 1052, 1073, 1088, 1143, 1153, 1163
Benefit Lost by Increased Rates ..	368, 648, 706, 860, 913, 940, 990, 998, 1027, 1052, 1153, 1183
AGRICULTURAL SHOWS	521, 879
ALCESTER, WARWICKSHIRE ..	1247
ALGERIA	1264
ALLOTMENTS	570, 829, 916, 947, 1140
In Wiltshire	221, 1140, 1144-1145
ALLUVIAL LAND	527
ALNWICK	1250
ANALYSIS	1245, 1250
ANIMALS —See <i>Cattle, Pedigree</i> —, and under Specified names.	
ANIMAL OFFALS —See under <i>Offals</i> .	
ANNUAL OUTGOINGS	270, 500, 502, 515, 519, 525, 531, 536, 540, 546, 554, 582, 589, 601, 608, 631, 636, 641, 648, 659, 660, 666-668, 675-676, 688, 693, 698, 703, 706, 708, 719, 761, 765, 769, 771, 772, 778, 789, 792, 796, 801, 805, 807, 811, 816, 823, 826, 836, 841, 852, 855, 861, 865, 871, 877, 881, 892, 898, 912, 927, 932, 940, 946, 951, 969, 981, 991, 993, 996, 999, 1004, 1011, 1018, 1022, 1025, 1031, 1034, 1037, 1047, 1053, 1057, 1063, 1066, 1069, 1073, 1077, 1080, 1083, 1088, 1090, 1110, 1163, 1198
ANTHRAX	1954
ANTI-CORN LAW LEAGUE ..	33
ANTRIM	331, 336, 343, 509, 511, 1125
APPLE	259, 260, 775, 906, 909, 955, 976, 1070, 1079

	Paragraph
APPLE—continued.	
Foreign Competition at Home	.. 775, 955, 1069, 1070
Import	.. 964, 979, 986, 991
Import Duty suggested	.. 910, 979, 1513
Preference to Colonies	.. 979, 1513
Prices	.. 910, 955, 976, 979
APPLE CIDER—See Cider.	
APPLE GROWING	.. 252, 254, 268-269, 906, 954, 976
APPRENTICESHIP	.. 780, 981
APRICOT PULP	.. 971
ARABLE LAND—See also Tillage	
	.. 119, 502, 506, 780, 826, 858, 883, 889, 1227, 1815
Area decreased	.. 199, 220, 222, 339, 354, 1046, 1159, 1221, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1230, 1231, 1298
In Scotland	.. 223, 1232, 1233, 1234, 2002
Ireland	.. 223-224, 591, 1235, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1557
Through Low Prices	.. 535, 618, 857, 889, 911, 925, 929, 931, 939, 1073, 1223, 1224, 1227, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1235, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1545, 1584, 1590, 1628, 1690
Through Labour Scarcity	.. 604, 1223, 1224, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1235, 1485, 1545, 1561
Area increased	.. 1221, 1222, 1229, 1236
Area unchanged	.. 1221, 1223, 1228, 1234
Labour on	.. 221, 495, 500, 700, 861, 911, 1088, 1496, 1667, 1693, 1830
ARGENTINE REPUBLIC	.. 599, 602, 709, 1356, 1465, 1867, 1871, 1925
Competition from	.. 272, 279, 281-282, 313, 1262, 1395
In Dairy Produce	.. 576, 599, 890, 1112, 1400
Live and Dead Meat	.. 709, 758, 890, 1097, 1356, 1388-1389, 1812, 1830, 1843, 1879, 1915
Offals	.. 1329, 1337, 1338
Oilcake	.. 1372, 1431
Wheat	.. 550, 745, 1346
Import Duty suggested on—	
Live and Dead Meat from	.. 1799, 1801, 1871, 1885, 1958
Wheat from	.. 594
Import Duty Paid by	.. 497, 564
ARTIFICIAL FOOD—See also Oilcake	.. 276, 723, 799
ARTIFICIAL MANURE	.. 226, 245, 510, 512, 536, 585, 586, 608, 728, 891, 1202, 1669, 1690
Co-operative Purchasing of	.. 524, 615, 728, 750, 772, 788, 833, 847, 870, 880, 885, 898, 917, 922, 989, 1072, 1244-1245, 1247-1248, 1250-1253
Increasingly used	.. 494, 510, 530, 619, 663, 671, 1235, 1791, 1909
Should come in Free	.. 1491, 1495, 1504, 1602, 1618, 1630, 1850
ARTISANS	.. 887, 1017, 1922
ASHBOURNE ACT	.. 529, 807
ASPARAGUS	.. 255-256, 387, 954, 956, 957, 992
ASSESSMENT	.. 264, 887, 908, 994
ATHBOY, IRELAND	.. 756
ATHY, IRELAND	.. 584, 707
AUCTIONS	.. 259, 535, 605, 685, 706, 782, 993, 1250
AUGHIRM, IRELAND	.. 1560
AUSTRALIA	.. 293, 298, 302-303, 385, 599, 755, 769, 866, 966, 1011, 1065, 1261, 1416, 2011
Competition from	.. 260, 276, 279, 313, 595-597, 960
In Dairy Produce	.. 599, 909, 1113, 1395, 1400, 1403
Flour	.. 1173, 1316, 1337
Meat	.. 597, 758, 1097, 1389, 1856
Wheat	.. 1174, 1469, 1868
Duty proposed, Beneficial to	.. 594, 979, 1647, 1852, 1868
Emigration to	.. 907
Farming Methods in	.. 755
Import Duties restrict Exports to ..	.. 1103, 1122, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012
Labour in	.. 755, 843, 1201

	Paragraph
AUSTRIA—See also Hungary	
Competition from	.. 101, 343, 685, 1202, 1426, 322, 326, 1261
In Flour	.. 1295, 1316, 1322, 1758
Hops	.. 1065, 1376
Starch	.. 741, 1365, 1366
AYLESBURY	.. 496, 782
AYRSHIRE	.. 921, 922, 1280
BACON—See also Rolled—, Singed—	
	.. 303-304, 1133, 1147, 1170, 1410
Cost of Production	.. 3, 1119, 1121, 1122, 1135, 1496, 1518
Dumping of	.. 1389, 1390, 1392, 1393, 1517
Export to Colonies	.. 298, 1103, 1133, 1389, 1413
France	.. 1119, 1132, 1133
U.S.A.	.. 1135
Restricted by Tariffs	.. 297, 1103, 1122, 1133, 1135, 2007, 2009, 2010
Foreign Competition at Home	.. 297, 335, 590, 1104, 1113, 1141, 1142, 1441
From Denmark	.. 297, 1103, 1126, 1132, 1133, 1134, 1149, 1392, 1524
In Colonies	.. 1416
Freight Rates on	.. 909, 1109, 1120, 1136
Import	.. 20, 305-306, 522, 809, 1101, 1104, 1116, 1393, 1394
Below Our Cost	.. 301, 1391, 1393
Increasing	.. 298, 1104, 1105, 1123, 1142
Injures our Industry	.. 758, 1105, 1127, 1132, 1133, 1441
Reduces our Prices	.. 1102, 1103, 1119, 1516
Import from Canada	.. 297, 1120, 1132, 1142, 1389, 1400, 1518
Denmark	.. 297, 1102, 1127, 1132, 1391, 1392, 1515
U.S.A.	.. 297, 724, 809, 830, 881, 1113, 1129, 1392, 1836
Import Duty not Desired	.. 1143, 1622, 1879, 1935
Import Duty Suggested	.. 299, 303, 305, 383, 393, 565, 762, 806, 855, 861, 913, 1092, 1138, 1140, 1143, 1150, 1506, 1518, 1526, 1655, 1760, 1761, 1797, 1835, 1883, 1923
Effect on Import	.. 1115, 1123, 1147, 1149, 1150, 1517, 1836, 1842
Home Industry	.. 1124, 1138, 1147, 1149, 1150, 1491, 1516, 1517, 1760, 1764, 1777, 1806, 1810, 1836, 1845, 1863, 1876
Labour	.. 808, 1138, 1441, 1491, 1517, 1518
Prices	.. 1516, 1517, 1810
Imported Sold as British	.. 1105, 1111, 1123, 1124, 1136, 1515
Preference to Colonies	.. 1125, 1131, 1142, 1147
Prices	.. 14, 497, 538, 915, 917, 1116, 1392, 1402, 1517
Canadian	.. 1116, 1120, 1135
Danish	.. 1119, 1120, 1127, 1135
Irish	.. 809, 915, 1116, 1119, 1120, 1135
U.S.A.	.. 724, 809, 1120, 1121, 1123, 1392, 1401, 1476, 1477
Production	.. 295, 297-298, 304, 649, 1109, 1131, 1143, 1150, 1254
In Denmark	.. 335, 729, 1102, 1119, 1120, 1142, 1347, 1394
Ireland	.. 303, 729, 847, 1119, 1120, 1121, 1135, 1136, 1394, 1836
Decreasing	.. 810, 829, 1124, 1133, 1394
U.S.A.	.. 294, 1121, 1129
Quality	.. 297-298, 1102, 2007
Canadian	.. 1113, 1120, 1131, 1136
Danish	.. 1113, 1119, 1120, 1131, 1133, 1136, 1391, 1524
U.S.A.	.. 1113, 1391
Effect of Maize Food on	.. 723, 1105, 1115, 1138, 1141, 1764
Staple Food of Poor	.. 809, 1113, 1123, 1138, 1143, 1517

		Paragraph
BACON—continued.		
Not Staple Food of Poor ..	304, 881, 1105, 1115,	
	1130, 1138, 1139, 1143, 1150, 1518,	
	1810, 1842	
BACON CURERS' ASSOCIATION ..	299	
BACON CURERS—Draft Questions to ..	486 492	
BAKERS ..	746, 747, 919, 1177, 1498, 1556, 1660	
BALLYMENA ..	302, 1120	
BANANAS ..	967	
BANKRUPT FARMERS ..	766, 944, 949, 1719	
BARLEY—See also <i>Feeding—, Malting—, Pearl—,</i>		
<i>Pot—, ..</i>	18, 206, 294-295, 726, 1101,	
	1148, 1427, 1623, 1765	
Cultivation Abroad ..	612, 1297	
At Home..	125-131, 177, 201, 213, 520, 585,	
	586, 704, 905, 937, 1223, 1225, 1239,	
	1344, 1580	
Decreased ..	123, 126, 131, 176, 206, 514,	
	603, 863, 1151, 1223, 1238, 1273, 1594	
Yield per Acre ..	133, 201, 521, 565, 585,	
	587, 628, 632, 807, 845	
Dumping of ..	1292	
Foreign Competition at Home ..	568, 707, 885,	
	1266, 1283, 1296, 1634	
Foreign Import Duty on ..	1356, 2010	
Freight Rates ..	1451	
Import ..	169-171, 175-176, 177, 206, 213, 564,	
	1237, 1283, 1284, 1294, 1356	
Below our Prices ..	521, 1288, 1293, 1352	
Import Duty not desired ..	1115, 1148, 1150, 1294,	
	1505, 1528, 1597, 1720	
Import Duty suggested ..	21, 211, 293, 393, 517,	
	573, 612, 620, 1025, 1198, 1483, 1489, 1492,	
	1507, 1617, 1727, 1746, 1760	
Insufficient ..	1157, 1482, 1545, 1550, 1574,	
	1663, 1685, 1767	
Would benefit Farmers..	709, 1507, 1550, 1577,	
	1587, 1590, 1699, 1786	
Would increase Home Production ..	789, 827,	
	1294, 1571, 1573, 1650, 1728	
Would raise Prices ..	942, 1294, 1558, 1563,	
	1568, 1588, 1626	
Would raise Wages ..	589, 1506	
Imported sold as British ..	1351, 1489	
Preference to Colonies ..	1643	
Prices ..	14, 65-68, 71-72, 82, 101-103, 201, 206, 521,	
	524, 544, 632, 718, 817, 845, 863, 1151,	
	1230, 1238, 1616	
Colonial ..	743, 1568	
Foreign ..	1294, 1298, 1341, 1358	
Prices Decreased ..	575, 585, 610, 612, 629, 707,	
	807, 822, 851, 1159, 1239, 1304, 1569	
Profits Ceased..	543, 629, 1119, 1233, 1239	
Diminished ..	206, 521, 691, 832, 1236	
Satisfactory ..	521, 587, 637, 775, 863	
Quality ..	568, 612, 845, 863, 1131	
BARREN COWS ..	493	
BARREN EWES ..	1791	
BASIC SLAG..	510, 755	
BASKET INDUSTRY—See also under <i>Fruit—, ..</i>	340, 594, 906	
BEANS ..	14, 18, 1617, 1631, 1638, 1765	
Cultivation ..	131, 133, 204, 205, 208, 565, 883,	
	1229, 1270, 1744	
Import ..	208-209	
Import below our Prices ..	1283, 1288	
Import Duty suggested ..	213, 1489, 1587, 1614,	
	1618, 1634	
Import Duty undesirable ..	1876	
BEDFORDSHIRE ..	199, 202, 205, 215-216, 219, 256,	
	292, 332, 941, 1159, 1162, 1163, 1826	
Agricultural Decline ..	1158, 1159, 1163, 1222	
Cottage Accommodation ..	1162	
Labour ..	1162, 1222, 1674	
Labour Scarcity ..	1161, 1162, 1222, 1689	
Market Organisation ..	1163, 1287	
Unemployment ..	1164, 1222	
Wages ..	962, 1162, 1689	

		Paragraph
BEEF—See also <i>Chilled—, Frozen—, Grass Fed—,</i>		
<i>Highland—, Refrigerated—, ..</i>	146-147, 280, 287,	
	304, 599, 789, 1100, 1388, 1794, 1842	
Foreign Competition at Home ..	281-282, 565,	
	590, 749, 773, 1194, 1852, 1926, 1932	
Import ..	181-186, 189-191, 279, 718, 914, 1093,	
	1100, 1539, 1781, 1788, 1802	
Below our Cost ..	1386, 1388	
From Colonies ..	504, 1774, 1775, 1854	
Injures Home Industry ..	597, 603, 1387,	
	1983, 1987	
Import Duty suggested ..	778, 855, 913, 1551,	
	1593, 1655, 1677, 1682, 1774, 1800, 1820,	
	1852, 1862, 1863, 1879, 1883, 1921, 1946	
Would benefit Home Industry ..	1659, 1696,	
	1779, 1782, 1786, 1793, 1796, 1799, 1816,	
	1820, 1821, 1824, 1871, 1876, 1879	
Would Raise Prices ..	565, 773, 1787, 1817,	
	1822, 1827, 1845, 1851	
Imported Sold as British ..	565, 1356, 1819, 1926,	
	1964, 1986, 1997	
Prices ..	14, 506, 587, 770, 778, 899, 919, 1093, 1778,	
	1849, 1862, 1945	
Decreased ..	275, 280, 518, 537, 707, 718,	
	774, 790, 794, 803, 822, 825, 851, 1159,	
	1238, 1849, 1991, 1998	
Decreased through Imports ..	755, 770, 930,	
	1115, 1388, 1921	
Prices of Imported ..	1388, 1801, 1819, 1944	
Production ..	755, 1096, 1101, 1525, 1987	
Profits ..	518, 537, 793, 1194, 1394, 1781, 1805, 1816,	
	1827, 1971, 1974	
Decline ..	780, 925, 1797, 1807, 1854	
Quality ..	506, 1093, 1096, 1097	
BEER ..	250, 698, 1009, 1043-1044, 1499, 1504, 1507,	
	1546, 1711	
Excise Duty ..	382, 693, 1090, 1504, 1567, 1721, 1732	
Prices ..	249, 251, 888, 1010, 1081, 1084, 1157, 1161	
BELFAST ..	326, 727, 889	
Foreign Competition in ..	532, 592, 1136, 1510	
Freight Rates to and from ..	539, 890, 907	
Starch Industry ..	741, 742, 1509, 1510	
Wheat Production ..	739, 889	
BELGIUM ..	258, 267, 623, 810, 925, 968, 1065, 1433, 1436	
Dumping from ..	1367	
Flax Production in ..	234, 1186, 1187, 1188, 1190, 1193	
Freight Rates ..	1457, 1462, 1471, 1612	
Import Duties ..	990, 1405, 1422, 1522, 2005	
Imports from ..	296, 322, 803, 1192, 1260	
Fruit ..	258, 949, 965, 968, 970, 980, 1454	
Hops ..	1069, 1376, 1378	
Vegetables ..	550, 938, 957	
BERKSHIRE ..	200, 203, 220, 306, 343, 670, 795, 1224, 1450	
BERWICKSHIRE ..	1233	
BIGGLESWADE ..	936	
BINDERS ..	516, 685, 1241	
BINMEN ..	1029	
BIRKENHEAD ..	281, 288, 755, 1093, 1815	
BIRMINGHAM ..	255, 1070, 1819	
BLACK CURRANTS ..	956, 975, 1070, 1072	
BLACKSMITHS ..	827, 1229	
BLANDFORD FARMERS' CLUB ..	580	
BLIGHT ..	244, 246, 1020, 1032, 1082	
BOARD OF AGRICULTURE ..	167, 181, 332-333, 356, 364-367,	
	371, 940, 989, 1109, 1965, 2013, 2032-	
	2033, 2038	
BOARD OF TRADE ..	181, 590, 1487, 1523	
BOG LAND ..	529	
BONANZA FARMING ..	745	
BONES ..	599, 1607	
BOOTS AND SHOES ..	1183, 1867, 1904	
BOSTON, LINES. ..	256, 1452	
BOTTLED FRUIT ..	266, 991	
BOUNTY ..	14-15, 17-22, 25-27, 104, 210, 688, 953,	
	966, 1483, 1866	
Abroad..	540, 601, 831, 989, 1310, 1326, 1469, 1488,	
	1508, 1766, 1781	
In Colonies ..	1396	

	Paragraph
BOUNTY— <i>continued.</i>	
In France ..	1300, 1314, 1317, 1318, 1325, 1332, 1744
BOUNTY ON WHEAT ..	15, 17-22, 25-27, 104, 210, 373
Desirable ..	210, 498, 566, 661, 704, 934, 953, 1164, 1184, 1497, 1504, 1600, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1685, 1769
Undesirable ..	211, 645, 844, 878, 1678
BOY LABOUR ..	826, 859, 1036
Scarcity ..	611, 614, 839, 916, 1079, 1229, 1442, 1689
Caused by Education ..	496, 614, 702, 859, 912, 945, 1017, 1036, 1689
BRADFORD ..	252, 759
BRAN—See also <i>Wheat</i> —	789, 928, 1160, 1184, 1251, 1284, 1337, 1348, 1706, 1749
Duty on Flour would Increase Supply ..	710, 1503, 1586, 1624, 1734, 1770
Export ..	1170, 1171, 1177, 1271
Import ..	592, 837, 1174, 1329, 1335, 1337, 1533
Price ..	290-293, 592, 1155, 1160, 1170, 1329, 1434, 1537, 1551, 1581, 1624, 1695, 1709, 1711, 1715, 1735, 1766
Decreased by Duty on Flour ..	532, 564, 1164, 1489, 1540, 1541, 1545, 1549, 1551, 1587, 1613, 1654, 1668, 1693, 1708, 1733
Increased by Flour Imports ..	1315, 1345, 1571
BRANDING OF IMPORTED MEAT—See under <i>Dead Meat, Meat.</i>	
BRANSTON, Lincs. ..	648
BRAZIL ..	302-303, 1122
BREAD ..	19, 747, 1161, 1179, 1749
Price ..	376-379, 933, 1685
Abroad ..	843, 1696
Compared with Wheat Price ..	746, 952, 1160, 1161, 1670, 1675, 1677
Registration Duty had No Effect on ..	934, 1528, 1599
Would be Raised by Duty Proposed ..	532, 573, 589, 1488, 1498, 1502, 1578, 1597, 1649, 1660, 1673, 1691, 1693, 1724, 1752, 1753
Would Not be Raised ..	497, 508, 579, 1074, 1179, 1198, 1490, 1502, 1561, 1588, 1668, 1671, 1695, 1704, 1741, 1771
BREADMAKING—See also <i>Bakers</i> ..	324, 547, 762, 849, 1177, 1179, 1292, 1301, 1347, 1765
Profits ..	746, 919, 1179
BREADSTUFFS ..	1622, 1629, 1636
BRECONSHIRE ..	1231, 1449, 1590, 1640
BREEDING—See also under <i>Various Animals</i> ..	273, 275, 599, 1127, 1395
In Ireland ..	597, 771, 905, 1816
Duties Proposed Beneficial ..	1776, 1791, 1818
BREWERY AMALGAMATIONS ..	1004, 1010, 1088
BREWING—See also <i>Beer, Free Mash Tub, Malting</i> ..	693, 1024, 1062, 1499
By-Products ..	1568
Effect of Duty Proposed ..	990, 1005, 1044, 1063, 1084
BREWING MATERIALS—See also <i>Hops, Malt, Barley</i> ..	1505, 1671
Foreign Barley ..	206, 612, 866, 930, 1304, 1496
Foreign Hops ..	250, 1043, 1044, 1080
Home Grown Hops ..	1020, 1022, 1023, 1062
Maize ..	817, 942, 1075, 1115, 1506, 1507, 1547, 1594, 1603, 1667, 1709, 1712, 1765
BRINE GOODS ..	942, 1765
BRISTOL ..	281, 323, 526, 1093, 1095, 1317, 1465
BROKEN MAIZE ..	1129
BRUSSELS SPROUTS ..	937, 1514
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE ..	205, 220, 226, 272, 280, 343, 780, 825, 1224, 1374, 1447, 1757
BUILDINGS ACT ..	1459
BULBS ..	794, 1435, 1478
Dumping ..	259, 996, 1382
Import ..	993, 996, 1380, 1381, 1515
BULGARIA ..	1265
BULL ..	540, 630, 715, 718, 752, 1925, 1993
BULLOCK ..	256, 282, 291, 688, 1096, 1102, 1854
Foreign Competition at Home ..	983, 1819, 1830
Import Duty Suggested ..	1776, 1792, 1804

	Paragraph
BULLOCK— <i>continued.</i>	
Prices ..	280, 825, 1819
BURY ST. EDMUNDS ..	884, 1223
BUSH FRUIT ..	270, 1291
BUTCHERS ..	285, 696, 1098, 1443, 1444
Duty Proposed Beneficial ..	1788, 1801, 1805, 1808
Licences Required to sell Imported Meat ..	1818, 1819
Profits ..	1091, 1818, 1829, 1987
BUTE ..	1233
BUTTER—See also <i>Pirkin—, Fresh—, Siberian—,</i>	330, 736, 901, 1395, 1407, 1435, 1995
Co-operative Production ..	314, 334, 591, 714, 898, 905, 1247, 1251
Co-operative Selling ..	539, 726, 847, 963, 1244, 1247, 1254
Cost of Production ..	735, 894, 901, 1170
Dumping ..	1311, 1400, 1893
Foreign Competition at Home ..	312, 540, 590, 714, 764, 845, 889, 1395, 1439
Freight Rates ..	316, 539, 898, 899, 1108, 1452
Import ..	20, 162, 313, 758, 1388, 1395, 1396, 1397, 1399, 1477, 1812
From Colonies ..	313, 909, 1075, 1112, 1113, 1396, 1400, 1403, 1643
Denmark ..	313, 1112, 1142, 1398, 1400, 1401, 1438, 1777
Russia ..	313, 1112, 1400
Import Duty Suggested ..	762, 855, 919, 1114, 1397, 1491, 1655, 1879
Beneficial to Home Industry ..	1696, 1775, 1777, 1782, 1786, 1804, 1814, 1836, 1851, 1863, 1879
Would Diminish Imports ..	1806, 1851, 1865
Would Raise Price ..	1397, 1520, 1776, 1872, 1892
Would not Raise Price ..	1796, 1820, 1841
Preference to Colonies ..	1518, 1520, 1820
Prices ..	14, 311, 314, 331, 534, 622, 899
Comparison of ..	898, 900, 1112, 1773
Have Risen ..	312, 320, 717, 896, 915, 1197, 1811, 1886
Have Fallen ..	308, 309, 313, 524, 711, 803, 804, 924, 1786, 1821, 1893
Through Imports ..	313, 803, 917, 1113, 1386, 1399
Through Intermittent Supply ..	537, 540, 896
Production ..	307, 313, 320, 543, 717, 721, 722, 735, 924, 1110, 1269, 1803
Abroad ..	540, 835, 896, 1112, 1347, 1394, 1397
In Ireland ..	309, 319, 330, 540, 591, 624, 721, 734, 760, 764, 891, 894, 1235
Profits ..	310, 312, 714, 722, 911, 919
Ceased ..	896, 1834, 1871
Decreased ..	273, 544, 710, 1113, 1806
Through Imports ..	1237, 1385, 1402
Quality ..	539, 606, 764, 1400, 1826
Of Danish ..	540, 835, 1524, 1790
Foreign ..	1113, 1269, 1400, 1401
Transport Facilities ..	622, 623, 730, 1112, 1453
BY-PRODUCTS—	550, 563, 736, 741, 1780, 1917
Of Flax ..	237, 706, 1186
Wheat ..	532, 1530, 1544, 1568, 1639, 1732
CABBAGES ..	135-136, 813, 881, 1449
CALF ..	311-312, 771, 895, 1788
Prices ..	751, 803, 828, 894, 1786, 1787, 1790
CALF REARING—	
In Ireland ..	751, 752, 774, 775, 1133, 1153, 1254
On Artificial Food ..	722, 723, 759, 828, 895, 1134, 1799, 1883, 1893
CALLAN, KILKENNY ..	854
CAMBRIDGESHIRE ..	201-202, 215, 251, 254, 272, 276-278, 309, 321, 343, 543, 545, 546, 1612
CANADA ..	34, 212, 552, 687, 743, 766, 1240, 1241, 1400, 1416, 1850
Competition from—	
In Apples ..	979, 1069, 1260, 1385, 1513

CANADA—Competition from—*continued.*

In Bacon	297, 300-301, 724, 1102, 1113, 1116, 1118, 1119, 1120, 1122, 1131-1132, 1135-1136, 1139, 1147, 1149, 1260, 1389, 1390-1391, 1393-1394, 1518, 1810
Cheese	1117, 1230, 1260, 1395, 1398, 1400-1401, 1520
Flour	532, 1179, 1260, 1315, 1329, 1335, 1340, 1342, 1356, 1647
Hay	889, 921, 1260, 1374
Meat	507, 1096, 1097, 1260, 1343
Oatmeal	207-208, 532, 1260, 1278, 1293, 1307, 1330, 1350-1352, 1353-1354, 1356-1357, 1359, 1360-1361, 1362-1363, 1420, 1467, 1505, 1570
Oats	510, 1260, 1295
Oilcake	1260, 1367, 1372, 1433
Wheat	542, 594, 602, 685, 743, 843, 1177, 1260, 1272, 1421, 1499, 1641, 1741, 1751, 1766
Preference proposed Beneficial	34, 212, 381, 385, 979, 1131, 1142, 1147
Of No Benefit	526, 769, 1614, 1657, 1658, 1852
Would Lower Prices	1502-1503, 1723
Would Increase Canadian Production	564, 844, 1502, 1627, 1888
Experimental Farms	989, 1109, 1127
Emigration to	339, 896, 907, 1444, 1854
Farming Methods in	255, 278, 314, 686, 726, 743, 768, 922, 1109, 1146
Import from	517, 1097, 1284, 1382, 1473, 1910
Labour in	697, 765, 768, 843, 1359
Shipping Rates to and from	685, 922, 1108, 1109, 1230, 1375, 1447, 1460, 1467, 1468, 1614, 1768
CANADIAN STORE CATTLE	598, 1874, 1945
Embargo on	598-599, 832, 1519, 1987
Reduces Cultivation of Land	598-599, 601
Exclusion desired	286, 385, 579, 598, 711, 760, 845, 908, 928, 1959
Free Admission desired	274, 504, 505, 507, 587, 766, 832, 1766, 1805, 1847, 1851, 1942, 1946-1947, 1956, 1982, 1993
Beneficial	586, 602, 785, 1520, 1539, 1806, 1829, 1945, 1993
Free from Disease	507, 508, 587, 598, 663, 1993
Import would Ruin Ireland	527, 587, 752, 760, 793, 804, 811, 1802, 1806, 1967
Would Reduce Prices	587, 636, 719, 751, 771, 793, 804
CANAL—See also <i>Water Transport</i>	258, 263, 605, 768, 1137, 1470
CANAL FREIGHT RATES	605, 631, 768, 1447, 1470
CANAL TRANSPORT IN IRELAND	1137, 1447
CANAL TRANSPORT NEGLECTED	496, 767, 1470
CAPITAL	287, 874, 1101, 1146, 1284, 1314, 1505, 1815
Invested in Hop Industry	242, 998, 1001, 1004, 1009, 1010, 1012, 1014, 1017, 1020, 1022, 1025, 1028, 1030, 1034, 1037, 1047, 1050, 1052, 1057-1058, 1063, 1065, 1076, 1080, 1083, 1088, 1090
Loss of	58, 930, 944, 1161, 1500, 1547, 1758
Required for Co-operation	279, 310, 1246, 1251, 1254
Sugar Beet Factories	361, 562, 1200
Security Increased by Duties	753, 1355, 1487, 1644
CARCASSES	286, 1136, 1827, 1906, 1911, 1927
CARDIFF	323, 1629, 1630
CARDIGAN	1250
CARLISLE	1468
CARLOW COUNTY	1236
CARMARTHEN	715, 717, 1250, 1568
CARPENTERS	1229
CARRICK-ON-SUIR	915-920
CARROTS	494, 1223
CARSHALTON	946
CART HORSE	925
CARTERS	876, 1027
CARTING	495-496, 890, 950
C.O.D. POSTAL SERVICE	269, 954

CASTLE DERMOT, IRELAND

CASUAL LABOUR	264, 339, 340, 342-343, 510, 1010, 1033, 1089
Scarcity	495, 518, 639, 760, 880
CATTLE—See also <i>Bull, Bullock, Canadian Stores, Calf, Carcases, Cow, Dairy, Fat, Half-bred, Heifers, Hereford, In-jed, Irish, Lean, Live, Mountain, Piners, Polled Angus, Sheep, Shorthorns, Stock, Store, Young</i>	141, 145, 271, 285, 288, 306, 314, 736, 830, 838, 853, 930, 1073, 1094, 1102, 1474, 1564, 1891, 1894, 1950, 1967
Foreign Competition at Home	279, 280, 773, 801, 818, 853, 889, 906, 1169, 1237, 1399, 1757, 1799, 1830, 1893, 1920, 1928, 1954, 1964
Import	279, 286, 1095-1096, 1539, 1788, 1815, 1908, 1917, 1924, 1933, 1949, 1952, 1955, 1976, 1989
Import Duty suggested	14, 20, 284, 394, 793, 836, 1098, 1337, 1717, 1731, 1736, 1812, 1814, 1852, 1871, 1888, 1891, 1915, 1953, 1959
Beneficial	284, 290, 532, 773, 1091, 1677, 1776, 1780, 1782-1783, 1786, 1788, 1791-1792, 1797, 1799, 1802, 1811, 1823, 1832, 1864, 1872-1873, 1879, 1885, 1932-1933, 1973, 1990
Would Cheapen Officials	789, 1147, 1544, 1726
Would Raise Prices	773, 919, 1525, 1774-1778, 1783-1784, 1787, 1793, 1800, 1804, 1815, 1828, 1832
Prices	281, 524, 709, 719, 766, 771, 829, 1386, 1774, 1812, 1832, 1871, 1876, 1898, 1973
Profits Reduced	224, 272, 282, 537, 755, 828, 925, 1070, 1495, 1830, 1930
Transport Complaints	283-284, 633, 793, 1906, 1922
Transport Rates	601, 719, 761, 767, 858, 1072, 1447-8
Comparison	820, 917, 1095, 1447, 1452, 1809, 1827, 1872, 1897
CATTLE BREEDING	507, 510, 521, 718, 778, 799, 1249, 1401, 1525, 1951, 1953, 1965
CATTLE BUYING	529, 611, 755, 770, 787, 859
CATTLE DISEASE—See also <i>Anthrax, Epizootic Lymphangitis, Foot and Mouth, Murrain, Pig, Pleuro-Pneumonia, Sheep, Thyroid Gland, Tuberculosis</i>	385, 507, 587, 598, 650, 760, 1117, 1903, 1936, 1938, 1949, 1951-1952, 1960-1961, 1965-1967, 1969, 1982, 1988-1989, 1992-1994, 1996-1997
CATTLE EMBARGO	223, 274, 385, 547, 579, 636, 908, 928, 1553, 1938, 1944, 1960-1961, 1965
Should be Removed	597-599, 766, 1905, 1912-1913, 1956
CATTLE FATTENING	273, 281, 309, 586-587, 622, 696, 736, 774, 1184, 1229, 1237, 1634, 1794, 1808, 1816, 1831, 1836, 1838, 1847-1848, 1891, 1948, 1956, 1999
Less Profitable	533, 584-586, 601, 748, 752, 809, 810, 825, 890, 930, 1232, 1235, 1237, 1385, 1519, 1800, 1809, 1827, 1830, 1836, 1861, 1871-1872, 1921
CATTLE FEEDING—See also <i>Stall—Winter</i>	504-505, 507, 587, 599, 601, 809, 832, 895, 1102, 1198, 1651, 1782, 1879, 1986
Encouraged by Corn Duty	709, 1058, 1147, 1349, 1717-1718, 1839
CATTLE FINISHING	1873, 1879, 1906, 1972
CATTLE FOOD	293, 543, 739, 757, 1187, 1193, 1348, 1480, 1541, 1553, 1573, 1594, 1616, 1649, 1697
Cheapened by Flour Duty	592, 1639, 1697, 1709, 1711, 1717, 1737, 1753, 1757
Import Duty Desirable	1499, 1508, 1756
CATTLE RAISING	222, 281, 548, 575, 603, 893, 1093, 1096-1097, 1736, 1948
Benefited by Proposed Duties	578, 1783-4, 1889
CATTLE RAISING IN IRELAND	540, 628, 748, 752, 758, 771, 906, 1253, 1938
Breed has Improved	759, 809, 905, 1197, 1874

	Paragraph
CATTLE RAISING IN IRELAND—continued.	
Chief Branch of Agriculture ..	624, 636, 751,
1235, 1237, 1924, 1926, 1936, 1966, 1984	
Proposed Duties Beneficial to ..	1636, 1803, 1829
Unprofitable ..	597, 622, 629, 785
CATTLE SLAUGHTERING ..	287, 908, 928, 1918, 1926,
	1955, 1959, 1977, 1998
CATTLE WEIGHING ..	530, 696, 786-787, 852, 867, 1969
CAVAN COUNTY ..	343, 530, 829-831
CEREALS—See also Corn, Grain, Cross-bred—, Crushed—,	
and under Specified Crops 104, 358, 1230, 1272, 1302	
Growing unprofitable ..	705, 707, 1195, 1238
Proposed Duty Beneficial ..	709, 1238, 1552, 1579, 1584
	1694, 1756
Preference to Colonies would Increase Imports	1694, 1867
CERTIFICATES OF PURITY ..	960
CHAFF CUTTERS ..	1241
CHANNEL ISLANDS ..	889
CHAET SUTTON, KENT ..	1051
CHEDDAR CHEESE ..	309, 533
CHEESE—See also Cheddar—, Cheshire—, Stilton—,	
	162,
	722, 924, 1395
Freight Rates ..	767, 899, 1108, 1230
Import ..	758, 1075, 1388, 1396, 1398, 1401
From Canada ..	1117, 1230, 1395, 1400, 1401
Prices ..	14, 308, 312, 533, 911, 920, 924, 1113
Controlled by U.S.A. Syndicates ..	1473, 1477
Proposed Duty desired ..	762, 1397, 1518, 1520, 1492,
	1806, 1892
Of Little Benefit ..	1397, 1520, 1804, 1845
CHEESE FACTORIES ..	533, 1803
CHEESE LAND ..	794
CHEESE MAKING ..	277, 307, 310, 320, 722-723, 794,
	924, 1110
CHESHIRE CHEESE ..	1117, 1230
CHILD LABOUR ..	539, 553, 566, 619, 702, 775-776
Abroad ..	572, 1201
In Hop-picking ..	873, 1052
Scarcity of ..	553, 604, 696, 702, 921, 1233
CHILE ..	1265, 1337-1338
CHILLED BEEF ..	277, 1387, 1896
Competes with Home-fed ..	1093, 1130, 1475, 1809,
	1819, 1976
Dumped by U.S.A. ..	1387-1388
CHINA ..	1166, 1267
CHURNS ..	924
CIDER—See also Synthetic—,	
Competition from U.S.A. .. 268-269, 1384-1385, 1513	
Foreign Import Duty on ..	260, 1383-1385, 1513
	1513, 2006, 2012
CLARE COUNTY ..	1236, 1555, 1888
CLAY LAND ..	656, 954, 1226
CLIMATE—See also Droughts, Frost Seasons	
	665, 687, 704,
	906, 1192-1193
Cost of Harvesting affected by ..	493, 685, 687, 1270
Favours Foreign Competition ..	494, 525, 612, 685, 687,
	696, 764, 768, 952, 964, 973, 978, 993, 995-
	996, 1055, 1073, 1307, 1382-1383, 1683, 1701
In Ireland ..	508, 529, 632, 1573, 1659, 1933
CLONMEL ..	914, 917, 919
CLOVER ..	222, 224-225, 755, 1225, 1374, 1457
COAL ..	534, 883, 903-904, 917, 1058, 1421, 1452,
	1456-1457
COASTING TRADE ..	1484
COD-LIVER OIL ..	723
COFFEE ..	1695, 1740
COLD STORAGE ..	270, 762, 901, 955, 966, 1084, 1093, 1095
COLONIES—See also Specified Colonies .. 768, 960, 966,	
	999, 1109, 1121, 1150, 1484, 1568, 1574,
	1774, 1855, 1866, 1869, 1947
Advantages ..	690, 705, 768, 1109, 1356, 1647,
	1701, 1856
Competition from ..	297, 584, 921, 1011, 1086, 1614,
	1804, 1854-1855
Aided by Freights ..	1614
Aided by Low Taxes ..	1643, 1647
In Bacon ..	1119, 1120, 1132
Dairy Produce ..	1230, 1910

	Paragraph
COLONIES—Competition from— continued.	
In Flour ..	1751
Meat ..	1143, 1321, 1801, 1846, 1854, 1856, 1858,
	1861, 1945
Oatmeal ..	1278, 1293, 1360, 1362
Oats ..	627, 1295, 1588, 1614, 1855, 1868
Wool ..	1901
Export to ..	298, 1103, 1389, 1471, 2011
Foreign Competition in ..	1104, 1389, 1401, 1411,
	1414-1415
Freight Rates to and from ..	979, 1469, 1647, 1652,
	1773, 1884
Import from ..	270, 519, 532, 960, 966, 1075, 1105, 1112,
	1296, 1393, 1523, 1568, 1734, 1804,
	1868, 1922
Meat ..	1097-1098, 1774-1775, 1884, 1927, 1953
Import Duties in ..	1103, 1122, 2012
Preference to ..	33, 381, 497, 501, 594, 709, 773, 801,
	871, 892, 960, 966, 1059, 1116, 1173, 1482,
	1502, 1597, 1608, 1638, 1648, 1652, 1679,
	1733, 1792, 1796-1797, 1802, 1816, 1857,
	1860, 1864, 1867-1868, 1873
Free Admission ..	941, 999, 1482, 1498, 1682, 1691,
	1771, 1793, 1801, 1820, 1878, 1982
Of Corn ..	573, 704, 881, 1147, 1498, 1506,
	1579, 1650, 1684, 1689, 1697, 1743, 1746, 1866
Dairy Produce ..	1518, 1520, 1881
Meat ..	872, 1797, 1874, 1879, 1880,
	1935-1936, 1946
Fifty per cent. ..	797, 817, 936, 1490, 1499,
	1637, 1643-1649, 1650-1651, 1654, 1678,
	1687, 1694-1695, 1716, 1751, 1764, 1838,
	1859, 1860, 1862, 1877, 1932, 1970
Under 50 % ..	583, 769, 860, 941, 1031,
	1180, 1585, 1643-1644, 1646, 1648-1649,
	1652-1653, 1687, 1689, 1859, 1861-1862, 1864
Undesirable ..	531, 542, 583, 979, 1115, 1508,
	1525, 1616, 1615, 1623, 1632, 1636, 1645,
	1648, 1657, 1679, 1683, 1789, 1822, 1824,
	1835, 1850, 1854, 1857-1858, 1863-1864,
	1868, 1881, 1892
On Corn ..	542, 641, 844, 1346, 1490, 1564,
	1576, 1587, 1603, 1612, 1614, 1623, 1626,
	1628, 1634, 1637, 1641, 1645, 1651-1656,
	1658, 1682, 1688, 1694, 1704, 1769, 1855, 1863
Dairy Produce ..	1491, 1812, 1845,
	1858, 1874
Flour ..	1169, 1603, 1652-1653, 1656, 1723
Meat ..	1491, 1812, 1824, 1833, 1845,
	1855, 1858, 1874, 1880
Would Benefit Colonies ..	650, 892, 1154, 1569,
	1616, 1647, 1779, 1814, 1817, 1832, 1846,
	1854-1857, 1865, 1965-1966
Would not Affect us ..	1002, 1018, 1532, 1567,
	1646, 1653, 1684, 1811, 1820, 1845, 1865,
	1885, 1892
Would Stimulate their Production ..	1502-1503,
	1513, 1579, 1585, 1594, 1621, 1657, 1693,
	1790, 1820, 1846, 1854, 1867, 1880
Would Increase Imports from ..	1565-1566, 1605,
	1643, 1694, 1722, 1799, 1822, 1847, 1858
Reciprocal Preference ..	389, 1086, 1172, 1651, 1675,
	1684, 1701, 1719, 1863, 1867, 1876, 1877, 1885
COMBER ..	890
COMBINATIONS—See also Amalgamations, Co-operation,	
Grain—, Kartells, Pools, S. African Shipping	
Ring, Trusts ..	571, 750, 816, 909, 988, 1004,
	1474, 1476-1479, 1480, 1490
Disorganise Business ..	1472, 1474, 1477, 1479,
	1480, 1759
Increase Prices ..	1473-1475, 1477-1479, 1626
COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS ..	1122, 1289
COMMISSION TRADE ..	950, 1250, 1514
COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES—See also Foreign—,	
	552, 1080,
In Hop-growing ..	1110, 1302, 1404, 1408, 1781
	1037, 1049, 1065, 1079,
	1080, 1088
Milling ..	1173, 1303, 1530

	Paragraph
COMPENSATION CLAUSE (Market Gardening) ..	956
CONDENSED MILK .. 271, 314, 695, 723, 880, 1266, 1438	
CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD	625, 723
CONNAUGHT	622, 625
CONNEMARA	752
CONSULS' FEES	2012
CONTINENT—See also Specified Countries ..	104, 110-112, 388, 511, 551, 599, 686, 978, 983, 1039, 1104, 1121-1122, 1401, 1407, 1513, 1639, 1851, 1868
Competition from .. 599, 742, 986, 1039, 1149, 1368-1369, 1401, 1406, 1804	
Exports to	1171, 1271, 1432
Hampered by Import Duties.. 1387, 1418, 1425-1426, 1428, 1433	
Imports from .. 958, 979, 990-991, 1150, 1385, 1388, 1394, 1568, 1806, 1812, 1834	
Assisted by Freight Rates .. 556, 941, 962, 977, 1003, 1461, 1471	
Sugar Beet Cultivation on .. 1199, 1200-1201, 1612, 2013 <i>et seq.</i>	
Wages Lower	1306, 1365, 1367-1368, 1370, 1406
CONTINUITY OF TRADE	1114, 1481, 1489, 1499
CONTINUOUS RUNNING	1329, 1332, 1338
CONTRACT SYSTEM OF GROWING	550-551
CO-OPERATION .. 260, 309, 312, 318, 321, 327-328, 497, 673, 708, 715, 720, 722, 725, 727, 732, 870, 1154, 1244, 1248, 1254	
Abroad.. ..	334-335, 535, 555, 1392, 1435
Advantageous.. 328-335, 524, 535, 571, 606, 714, 721, 726, 731, 734, 739, 750, 870, 922, 1154, 1245-1249, 1250-1251, 1254	
Desirable .. 332-333, 523, 600, 706, 731, 898, 927, 1143, 1246, 1251, 1254, 1812	
Development of 328-335, 616, 686, 713, 847, 989, 1250	
Effect on Prices .. 331, 539, 581, 713, 727, 729, 880, 1253	
Facilitates Transport.. 516, 593, 633, 714, 730, 870, 878, 963, 1071, 1248	
Failures	332, 823, 870, 968, 1246
Non-existent	756, 782, 804, 852, 940, 950, 1163, 1250
Undesirable	701, 840, 859, 978, 1163, 1248
Unpopular .. 517, 539, 626, 659, 732, 894, 898, 940, 1249, 1252	
CO-OPERATIVE BUYING .. 328, 332-333, 714, 725, 959, 1246, 1251, 1252	
Of Feeding Stuffs .. 328, 833, 880, 885, 922, 989, 1072, 1244, 1246-1248, 1250-1252	
Machinery 328, 725, 772, 788, 885, 922, 989, 1072, 1196, 1244, 1246-1247, 1251-1252	
Manures .. 328, 524, 555, 615, 728, 750, 772, 833, 847, 870, 880, 885, 922, 989, 1072, 1244-1245, 1247-1248, 1250-1252	
Seeds .. 524, 728, 847, 989, 1072, 1196, 1244, 1248, 1250-1252	
CO-OPERATIVE CREAMERIES .. 329, 330-331, 721, 788, 810, 854, 894-895, 1247, 1253, 1791	
Successful .. 314, 330-331, 722, 788, 880, 894, 896, 917-918, 1251-1252	
Unsuccessful	908, 1247, 1252
CO-OPERATIVE SELLING .. 236-237, 330-335, 696, 847, 870, 1248, 1254	
Beneficial .. 330-331, 726-728, 761, 885, 898, 968, 1154, 1244, 1250, 1252	
Undesirable	555, 1247-1248, 1250
Unsatisfactory .. 334, 555, 714, 725-728, 859, 885, 963	
CORK .. 252, 305, 311, 774-778, 879, 880, 896, 1448, 1451, 1560, 1671	
CORN—See also <i>Dross</i> —, and Specified Crops .. 13, 14, 19, 21, 27, 220, 543, 769, 1363, 1556, 1566, 1593, 1596, 1644, 1688-1689, 1690, 1693, 1734, 1741, 1850	
Bounty	14-17, 19, 21, 26-27, 704, 1164, 1497, 1607
Cost of Production	768, 784, 1229, 1659

	Paragraph
CORN—continued.	
Cultivation .. 12, 120-126, 198, 552, 574, 694, 756, 912, 1227-1229, 1296, 1516, 1538, 1564, 1577, 1632, 1659, 1677, 1688, 1714, 1738, 1778, 1785	
Displaced.. ..	123, 127, 199, 204, 216, 224-225, 353-354, 548, 650, 814, 828, 929, 1010, 1221, 1223, 1230, 1500, 1628
Unprofitable .. 580, 629, 637, 647, 660, 662, 672, 699, 766, 771, 780, 802, 812, 818, 825, 838, 931, 1161, 1221, 1224-1228, 1232, 1237, 1446, 1485, 1497, 1528, 1539, 1545, 1560, 1583, 1661, 1674, 1712, 1805	
Export	13, 16, 17, 21, 26, 27
Foreign Competition .. 766, 794, 865, 1232, 1446, 1538, 1623	
Freight Rates .. 516, 640, 794, 1447, 1449, 1450, 1455, 1468	
Import	28, 160, 162, 853, 1283, 1288, 1321, 1399, 1527, 1579, 1636, 1717, 1726
Import Duty Suggested .. 14, 21, 27, 29, 782, 1073, 1619, 1623-1624, 1626, 1645, 1648, 1659, 1661, 1695, 1706-1708, 1729, 1831, 1860, 1863	
Alternative Proposals .. 871, 936, 1198, 1499, 1589, 1594, 1637, 1643-1644, 1646, 1648, 1650, 1655, 1662, 1666, 1668, 1672, 1674-1676, 1679, 1683-1684, 1686-1689, 1690, 1692, 1694, 1705, 1765, 1891	
Beneficial.. 693, 827, 1500, 1532-1535, 1538, 1544-1549, 1551, 1553, 1555, 1560-1561, 1563, 1565, 1568-1569, 1570-1572, 1576-1577, 1583, 1589, 1592, 1595-1596, 1603, 1608, 1610-1611, 1618, 1651-1652, 1660, 1670-1672, 1681-1682, 1684, 1687, 1700, 1702-1706, 1713, 1719, 1722, 1729, 1833, 1863	
Cultivation Increased by .. 828, 947, 1491, 1500, 1537, 1541, 1544, 1552, 1555, 1557-1558, 1560, 1562-1563, 1573, 1581, 1583, 1590, 1603, 1608, 1619, 1632, 1653, 1659, 1661, 1664, 1677, 1688, 1694, 1708, 1714, 1723, 1729, 1730, 1763, 1878	
Desirable .. 517, 769, 789, 817, 827, 878, 1100, 1499, 1501, 1505, 1516, 1561-1563, 1576, 1580, 1592, 1613, 1635, 1644, 1652-1653, 1659, 1678, 1705, 1707, 1711, 1806	
Employment Increased by .. 769, 1536, 1540, 1552, 1557, 1690, 1932	
Expenses Increased by .. 1628, 1632, 1640, 1663, 1666, 1813	
Imports Unaffected by .. 620, 1580, 1592, 1641, 1655, 1658, 1692-1693, 1798	
Incidence of .. 1498, 1588, 1601, 1615, 1619, 1716	
Insufficient 582, 769, 1513, 1585, 1607, 1621, 1628, 1638, 1640, 1651, 1653, 1658, 1661-1663, 1666, 1669, 1671-1674, 1677, 1680-1681, 1684, 1686, 1691, 1698-1699, 1735	
Milling Stimulated by .. 1169, 1536, 1540, 1551-1552, 1555, 1561, 1576, 1625, 1687, 1692, 1712	
Prices Increased by .. 536, 811, 827, 919, 1449, 1528, 1532, 1536, 1539, 1545, 1551, 1554, 1556, 1558, 1560-1561, 1564, 1570, 1575, 1578, 1580-1581, 1583, 1585-1586, 1588, 1590-1593, 1609, 1615, 1619, 1620, 1625, 1627, 1629, 1632, 1641-1642, 1644, 1651, 1660, 1674-1676, 1694	
Prices Reduced by .. 1565, 1594	
Prices Steadied by .. 1559, 1562, 1573, 1576, 1591, 1713	
Prices Unchanged by .. 1504, 1508, 1543, 1568, 1579, 1582, 1584-1586, 1594, 1598-1599, 1601-1602, 1605, 1615, 1622, 1634, 1636, 1645, 1653, 1655-1656, 1658, 1660, 1668, 1683, 1695, 1699, 1716, 1725, 1762, 1890	

CORN, Import Duty Suggested—continued.

Paragraph

Revenue Increased by ..	1572, 1576, 1603, 1692, 1700, 1730
Taxation Relieved by ..	1563, 1571, 1578-1579, 1580, 1584, 1597-1599, 1600-1601, 1603-1604, 1625, 1650, 1709, 1785
Undesirable ..	502, 910, 1528, 1567, 1579, 1583, 1598, 1600, 1604, 1606-1607, 1609, 1612-1613, 1615-1617, 1621-1624, 1626-1631, 1633-1640, 1642, 1644-1645, 1653-1655, 1659-1661, 1668, 1676, 1679, 1682, 1685, 1688, 1693-1694, 1697, 1701-1702, 1710-1712, 1714-1717, 1719, 1720, 1723-1724, 1727-1728, 1732-1733, 1737, 1763, 1769, 1770, 1890, 1991
Wages Increased by ..	769, 1583, 1597, 1629
Preference on ..	27, 30, 641, 789, 947, 1587, 1615, 1627-1628, 1637, 1646, 1656, 1684, 1719, 1769
Advocated ..	704, 801, 881, 1100, 1184, 1589, 1644, 1650-1652, 1684, 1695, 1697, 1701, 1733, 1868
Opposed ..	1564, 1637, 1645, 1652, 1656, 1658, 1688, 1704
Prices of ..	13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 76, 81-83, 524, 580, 650, 690-691, 700, 847, 884, 911, 1008, 1071, 1151, 1223, 1227, 1229, 1231, 1512, 1630, 1634
Registration Duty ..	1073, 1529, 1537, 1569, 1589, 1600, 1632, 1656, 1668, 1674, 1679, 1700, 1708, 1718, 1727-1728, 1739, 1740
CORN LAWS ..	12, 13, 21, 24, 26, 29-30, 33, 104
Prices Under ..	13, 58, 82
Repeal of ..	52, 57, 65, 115
CORN STARCH ..	741, 1510
CORNFLOUR ..	327, 742
CORNERS ..	1336, 1759, 1916
COST OF LIVING ..	578, 688, 892, 947, 1685, 1688, 1818, 1888
COST OF PRODUCTION ..	239, 544, 677, 681-682, 768, 798-799, 956, 1189-1190, 1195, 1294, 1499, 1604, 1891
Affected by Cost of Machinery ..	1243, 1492, 1517, 1659, 2011
Increased by Proposed Duties ..	1496-1498, 1525, 1629, 1813, 1817, 1853
Reduced by Proposed Duties ..	1114, 1167-1168, 1438, 1444, 1482, 1487-1488, 1492, 1499, 1509, 1510-1512, 1518-1519, 1522, 1740, 1750, 1753, 1755-1756, 1760
Unchanged by Proposed Duties ..	1498-1499, 1508, 1513, 1520, 1602, 1730, 1747, 1753, 1756
COST OF PRODUCTION—	
Abroad..	259-260, 822, 1088, 1335, 1369, 1375, 1499, 1779, 1891, 2005
In Canada ..	743, 1359, 1467
Denmark ..	901
Germany ..	742, 1382
U.S.A. ..	260, 1298, 1314, 1324, 1332, 1338, 1340, 1366
Of Bacon ..	1121-1122, 1135, 1496, 1517-1518
Beef ..	280, 1093, 1388, 1817, 1891, 1853, 1953
Bread ..	1161, 1753
Butter ..	735, 894, 901, 1170, 1520, 1877
Cattle ..	1809, 1872-1873, 1879
Flour ..	532, 1167, 1283, 1298, 1319, 1334, 1438, 1444, 1746-1747, 1750, 1753, 1755
Grain ..	202, 225, 601, 827, 1501, 1508, 1582, 1594, 1632, 1730, 1756
Hops ..	244-245, 248, 1025, 1030, 1032, 1034, 1039, 1049, 1052, 1055, 1069, 1076, 1080, 1082, 1085, 1089, 1090, 1283, 1492, 1593, 1676
Lard ..	1410, 1519
Margarine ..	1407, 1520, 1522
Oilcake ..	1511-1512
Starch ..	1510-1511

COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION ..	344-351, 530, 553, 606-907, 634, 702, 712, 719, 839, 852, 1017, 1162
Defective ..	344-347, 495, 540, 614, 625, 692, 712, 839, 848, 876, 903, 921, 940
Encourages Labour to Stay..	346-349, 495, 570, 604, 607, 719, 807, 819, 839, 860, 876, 883, 998
Improvement in ..	345, 347, 350, 519, 581, 674, 830, 912, 940, 1010, 1076, 1089, 1153
In Ireland ..	345, 347-348, 350-351, 511, 588, 631, 764, 777, 791, 800, 810, 826, 830, 852, 854, 897, 907, 1197
Provided by Local Authorities ..	345, 347-350, 588, 719, 772, 777, 819, 820, 886, 897
Scarcity of ..	344, 345, 347-348, 570, 606-607, 625, 658, 686, 819, 839, 869, 921, 958, 1017, 1229, 1292
Sufficient ..	347-348, 350, 499, 515, 546, 553, 619, 648, 652, 665, 697, 768, 781, 814-815, 860, 863, 921, 926, 950, 989, 1072, 1153, 1162
COTTAGE BUILDING ..	345-351, 512, 530, 540, 705, 756, 840, 848, 860, 876, 881, 886, 891, 897, 908, 918, 922
COTTAGE GARDENS ..	349, 350-351, 495, 830, 881
COTTAGE RENT ..	349, 708, 830, 860, 881, 886, 897, 903, 907, 950, 958
COTTAGE TENANTS..	345, 347-351, 830, 884, 1017, 1077, 1153
COTTON SEED ..	228, 871, 1370, 1523
Should be Admitted Free ..	1541, 1549, 1558, 1562, 1600, 1602, 1625, 1643-1644, 1650, 1701
COTTON SEED CAKE ..	1148, 1284, 1503, 1808, 1872
Imports from Egypt ..	1368-1369, 1370, 1373
Proposed Duty on ..	1512, 1701
Should not be Taxed ..	1637, 1667, 1672
COTTON SEED OIL ..	302, 1136, 1276, 1420, 1433, 1523
COUNTERVAILING DUTIES..	820, 1310, 1418, 1484, 1487-1488
COUNTRY MILLS ..	322, 905, 1167, 1347, 1538, 1630, 1729
Helped by Demand for Offals ..	1160, 1623, 1732
Ruined by Imports of Flour, &c. ..	1315, 1333, 1467, 1538, 1720, 1726, 1749
COUNTY COUNCIL ..	659, 860, 885, 940
Assists Technical Education ..	539, 545, 570, 716, 840, 908, 950, 989
Local Rates Increased by ..	496, 536, 648, 693, 756, 940, 1076, 1090
COVENT GARDEN ..	259, 994
Cows—See also <i>Barren—, Dairy—, Milch—, Young—</i> ..	307, 508, 874, 895-896, 1225, 1993
Breeding in Denmark ..	335, 735-736, 835
Feeding Stuffs for ..	293, 895, 1160, 1540
Prices ..	774, 1774, 1831, 1848, 1985
Quality Compared ..	507, 630, 736
CREAM ..	901, 1395, 1397
CREAMERIES ..	278, 310, 721, 734-735, 870, 895, 1133, 1254, 1799
Beneficial locally ..	312, 319, 591, 734, 898, 905
Co-operation in ..	329, 331, 721-722, 725, 854, 896, 898
In Denmark ..	735-737
Injurious to Cattle Rearing ..	895, 905, 1133-1134, 1888, 1893
Pasteurisation in ..	735, 896, 1134
Profits of ..	310, 329-330, 722, 919
CREDIT ..	713, 724, 1248
CROPS—See also under specified names ..	18, 493-494, 677, 784, 889, 1073, 1235
CROSS-BRED CEREALS ..	939
CROYDON ..	1564
CRUSHED CEREALS ..	1432
CUBA ..	1417
CULTIVATORS ..	1241
CUMBERLAND ..	203, 318, 343, 603-607, 1231
CUMBERLAND & WESTMORELAND CHAMBER OF AGRIC. ..	603
CURRENTS ..	253, 985-986, 1070
CUSTOMS' REGULATIONS ..	1103, 1426, 1523
CYPRUS ..	1266

	Paragraph
DAIRY —See also <i>Creameries</i> .. 335, 788, 824, 828, 916, 917, 1247	
DAIRY CATTLE 1198, 1618, 1734	
DAIRY COWS 890, 892, 897, 1961	
Prices of 274, 313, 599, 678, 1395	
DAIRY FARMING .. 307, 355, 599, 1157, 1179, 1626, 1764, 1813, 1948	
Import Duty suggested—	
Beneficial to .. 1551, 1553, 1646, 1772, 1807, 1810, 1872, 1884, 1889, 1950	
Not Beneficial 1617, 1631, 1645, 1661, 1811, 1845	
In Ireland .. 25, 275, 537, 734, 760, 774, 803, 890, 896, 914, 916, 1888, 1889	
Labour Scarcity in 341, 916, 926, 1229, 1877	
Profits 518, 611, 652, 803, 889, 896, 914	
DAIRY INSTRUCTION .. 519, 525, 570, 606, 716-717, 768, 834	
DAIRY PRODUCE—See also under Specified names .. 1141, 1142, 1399, 1799, 1833, 1864, 1999	
Co-operative Production 571, 963, 1250	
Foreign Competition 312, 386, 580, 906	
Import .. 161, 307, 355, 1142, 1398, 1773, 1811, 1846, 1876, 1886	
Import Duty suggested—	
Beneficial .. 317, 386, 394, 547, 583, 594, 695, 872, 1521, 1779, 1783, 1793, 1794, 1800, 1802, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1814, 1816, 1832, 1837, 1845, 1851, 1860, 1878, 1889, 1892, 1893	
Not Beneficial 1843, 1847, 1850, 1860	
Colonial Exemption undesirable .. 695, 797, 1491, 1862	
Higher Rate desirable .. 817, 1860, 1864, 1871, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1880, 1888, 1889, 1890	
Would not Raise Prices .. 1773, 1845, 1848, 1862, 1873, 1890	
Would Raise Prices .. 1773, 1776, 1783, 1784, 1790, 1799, 1807, 1810, 1823, 1828, 1845, 1858, 1878, 1881, 1889	
Prices 81, 311, 518, 1141, 1849, 1858	
Profits 312, 924, 1886	
DAIRYING—See also <i>Milking, Winter</i> — 178, 306-321, 330, 690, 734, 843, 1284, 1530	
Abroad 386, 611, 835, 1112, 1396, 1435	
Decline of 507, 599, 703, 804, 1231, 1787, 1806, 1880, 1889, 1962	
Extension .. 282, 306, 734, 893, 1014, 1230, 1831	
Import Duties Beneficial .. 318, 843, 1497, 1803, 1806, 1828, 1875, 1892	
Profit .. 273, 275, 306, 309, 533, 845, 924, 1182, 1820, 1888	
DAIRYING LABOUR .. 308, 518, 767, 880, 1229, 1877	
DALBEATTIE 518-519	
DAMSONS 268, 978	
DARLINGTON 869, 870	
DEAD MEAT 517, 599, 1894, 1916	
Detection of Disease 1914, 1916, 1958-1959, 1961, 1986	
Dumping 1355, 1909	
Freight Rates .. 1809, 1897, 1899, 1902, 1912, 1945	
Import .. 181-196, 1093, 1357, 1874, 1899, 1900, 1912-1915, 1933-1934, 1998	
Causes Unemployment 600, 1443	
Desirable 1922, 1930, 1939, 1949	
Injures Home Industry .. 773, 1895, 1911-1912, 1946, 1970, 1971, 1979, 1987	
Import Duty suggested .. 806, 1098, 1781, 1801, 1829, 1897, 1907, 1909, 1913, 1918, 1931, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1967, 1971, 1974	
Beneficial to Home Industry .. 1491, 1544, 1782, 1799, 1923, 1927, 1941, 1984	
Beneficial to Labour .. 1910-1911, 1913, 1919, 1971, 1990	
Effect on Prices .. 1847, 1880, 1917, 1919, 1937, 1946, 1976	
Higher than on Live Meat .. 517, 547, 602, 805, 855, 1098, 1894 <i>et seq.</i>	
Lower than on Live Meat .. 1879, 1920 <i>et seq.</i>	

	Paragraph
DEAD MEAT, Import Duty Suggested—continued.	
Same as on Live Meat .. 817, 872, 182, 1879, 1888, 1927, 1967 <i>et seq.</i>	
Undesirable .. 756-757, 1926, 1935, 1941, 1944, 1974, 1977, 1992	
Imported should be Branded .. 762, 1912, 1958	
Imported Sold as British 1928, 1968	
Prices .. 621, 1827, 1865, 1898, 1913, 1934, 1936, 1970	
Profits 1519, 1906, 1972, 1985, 1988	
Transport Facilities .. 1095, 1896, 1907, 1939, 1986	
DEAD POULTRY 904, 909	
DEER FORESTS 597, 1278, 1387	
DEMURRAGE CHARGES 941	
DENBIGHSHIRE 1232	
DENMARK .. 291, 306, 319, 376, 735-737, 834-836, 1102, 1121, 1392, 1435	
Bacon—	
Competition from .. 1103, 1126, 1132-1134, 1149, 1392, 1524	
Import from .. 297, 335, 1102, 1127, 1132, 1136, 1138, 1389-1393	
Prices 1116, 1119, 1120, 1127, 1135	
Production .. 3, 297, 729, 1119, 1120, 1142, 1394	
Quality 1113, 1119, 1120, 1131, 1133	
Beef 1394	
Bounties in 540, 601	
Butter—	
Cost of Production 901	
Import from .. 313, 540, 734, 889, 1112, 1142, 1397, 1400, 1401, 1403, 1406, 1438, 1790, 1851, 1865	
Price 313, 896, 898	
Production 540, 835, 896	
Quality 540, 835, 900, 1524, 1803	
Co-operation 321, 335, 721, 729, 1435	
Creameries 335, 735-737, 835, 898	
Dairying .. 314, 335, 611, 735-737, 1142	
Farming 611, 737, 1142	
Import from .. 300-301, 322, 1118, 1136, 1263, 1410, 1473	
Labour Conditions in .. 1121, 1135, 1392, 1396, 1398	
Offal Export to .. 376, 582, 1169, 1179, 1655	
Pig-feeding 278, 335, 724, 1102, 1394	
Pig-killing 1126, 1133, 1142	
Pork 1135	
Small Holdings 1110	
State Aid .. 611, 737, 835, 1109, 1137, 1142	
Technical Education .. 321, 576, 737, 834-835, 927	
Transport Rates .. 303, 539, 898, 922, 1106, 1109, 1123, 1128, 1131, 1461-1464	
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (IRELAND) .. 312, 539, 593, 719, 830, 896, 898, 1195	
Assists Farmers 511, 725, 732, 733, 761	
Assists Technical Education .. 525, 530, 852, 854, 891, 918	
DEPOPULATION .. 58, 220, 352, 505, 1137, 1233, 1637	
DEPTFORD 1095	
DERBYSHIRE .. 215, 216, 268, 278, 924, 970, 1348	
DERBYSHIRE AGRIC. AND HORTIC. SOC. .. 278, 280, 923	
DERELICT LAND .. 256, 265, 572, 884, 956, 1161, 1446, 1485	
DERRY 528, 532, 1125	
DERWENT 903	
DESICCATED MILK 272, 576	
DEVONSHIRE 313, 1501, 1599	
DEXTRENE 327, 1438, 1510	
DIFFERENTIAL RAILWAY RATES FAVOUR IMPORTS .. 33, 216, 230, 262-263, 283, 287, 325, 535, 550, 556, 567, 578, 601, 615, 620, 640, 685, 767, 788, 794, 816, 858, 909, 926, 932-933, 941, 963, 965, 977, 1003, 1024, 1043, 1046, 1072, 1100, 1136, 1163, 1179, 1278, 1288, 1338, 1355, 1395, 1407, 1449, 1451-1464, 1467-1471, 1612, 1658, 1763, 1796, 1809, 1819, 1884, 1895, 1902, 1915	
DINGLEY TARIFF 2001	
DISEASE—See also <i>Cattle</i> —, <i>Pests</i> 1996	
DISTILLING 19, 693, 1490-1491, 1568	
Use of Maize .. 1075, 1105, 1115, 1594, 1603, 1709	

DISTRICT COUNCIL—

Cottage Building by ..	349, 511, 719, 848, 886, 891
Extravagance of ..	697, 860, 864, 913, 1076
DIVIDENDS ..	258, 534, 627, 691, 721, 748, 1344
DOCK FACILITIES ..	1470
DOCK RATES ..	1472
DOCKSIDE MILLS ..	1528
DONEGAL ..	31, 281, 343, 528-532, 1251, 1803, 1872
DORSETSHIRE ..	200, 202, 215, 220, 276, 321, 336, 346, 691-695, 1110, 1349, 1440, 1500, 1727
DOWN ..	509, 537-542, 889-892, 1125, 1185, 1633, 1879
DOWN LAND ..	1227
DRAFT QUESTIONS TO WITNESSES ..	477-492
DRAINAGE ..	341, 512, 554, 767, 847, 850
DRAUGHT HORSES ..	784
DRAWBACK (ON DUTY) ..	291, 325, 361, 376, 1160, 1184, 1301, 1309, 1744
DRIED FRUIT ..	991
DRIED GRAIN ..	1271
DRIED HOPS ..	1376
DRIED VEGETABLES ..	991
DROGHEDA ..	756
DROSS CORN ..	1273
DROUGHTS ..	276, 279, 594, 597, 603
DRY HAMS ..	300, 1126
DRY STOCK ..	1831
DUBLIN ..	281, 283, 631, 750, 753, 807, 915, 1095, 1447, 1892
DUMPING ..	209, 299, 542, 1082, 1122, 1240, 1292, 1332, 1348, 1364, 1367, 1369, 1423, 1446, 1482, 1483, 1498, 1506
Assisted by Foreign Tariffs ..	1040, 1305, 1366, 1378, 1517
Prevention by Proposed Duty ..	1346, 1355, 1481, 1487, 1490-1492, 1500, 1505, 1508-1509, 1518, 1546, 1715, 1749, 1752, 1762
DUMPING OF—	
Bacon and Hams ..	1390, 1392, 1393
Cattle ..	1809, 1891, 1893
Flour ..	325-326, 1184, 1304, 1308, 1311, 1316, 1317, 1333, 1335, 1345, 1652
From U.S.A. ..	591, 1166, 1174, 1178, 1290, 1302, 1313-1314, 1316, 1320-1321, 1324, 1326-1327, 1329, 1332-1336, 1338, 1340-1341, 1343, 1346, 1348, 1356
Hops ..	389, 1006, 1024, 1037, 1039, 1055, 1062, 1063, 1069, 1376, 1492
Horticultural Produce ..	259, 993, 996, 1380, 1382
Lard ..	1147, 1390, 1392, 1393, 1410
Margarine ..	315, 1403-1404, 1406-1407, 1522
Meat ..	1138, 1388, 1476, 1900, 1901, 1909
Oatmeal ..	207, 594, 1359, 1362
Starch ..	326-327, 741-742, 1364-1367, 1411, 1509
Wheat ..	1291, 1498
Wheat Offal ..	1170, 1335
DUNLAVIN, Co. WICKLOW ..	820
DURHAM ..	215-216, 867-870, 1301

EARLY POTATOES

EAST AFRICA ..	813, 889
EAST ANGIA ..	1267
EAST BERKS ..	1103
EAST HEREFORDSHIRE ..	670
EAST KENT ..	1066
EAST MIDLANDS ..	1029, 1044, 1056
EAST SUFFOLK ..	1224
EAST SUFFOLK CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE ..	885, 1152
EASTERN COUNTIES ..	271, 567
EASTERN ENGLAND ..	328, 1639
EDINBURGH ..	1221
EDINBURGH ..	1250, 1465, 1519

EDUCATION—See also *Agricultural—, Dairy Instruction,*

Farm Training, Horticultural Classes, Instructor,

Pruning, Scholarship, School, Technical—,

Travelling Schools .. 540, 577, 593, 708, 781, 981, 1877

Causes Scarcity of Boy Labour .. 339, 580, 604, 614, 781, 945, 1689

EDUCATION—continued.

Excessive ..	859, 915, 1036, 1445
Unsuitable ..	495, 545, 553, 593, 600, 619, 658, 697, 700, 702, 703, 705, 826, 834, 932, 1017, 1034, 1144, 1233
EDUCATION ACT, 1902 ..	639, 697, 702, 781, 887
Increased Local Rates ..	368, 500, 536, 607, 648, 860, 1086
EDUCATION COMMITTEE (IRELAND) ..	1197
EDUCATION COST ..	553, 640-641, 652, 840, 877, 887, 946, 1080, 1086
Increasing ..	337, 519, 554, 607, 640, 674, 697, 959, 1010, 1050
Should be National ..	496, 517, 553, 593, 674, 817, 959
EGGS ..	322, 330, 622, 714, 1226, 1422
Co-operation in ..	761, 885, 918, 1154, 1244, 1252, 1253, 1254
Cost of Production ..	1496, 1891
Dumping ..	1311, 1891
Import ..	161, 322, 590, 1401, 1402, 1521
Import Duty Suggested ..	394, 591, 762, 1491, 1521, 1865, 1876, 1886
Production ..	760, 1879
Prices ..	1386, 1399
Transport Facilities ..	622, 623, 730
EGYPT ..	208-209, 296, 1264, 1368-1373, 1433, 1503
ELECTRIC POWER ..	935
EMIGRATION ..	342, 594, 621, 709, 775, 915, 944, 1125
Caused by Free Imports ..	707, 1494
Unemployment ..	592, 801, 811, 823, 846, 892, 907
Causes Labour Scarcity ..	528, 538, 708, 749, 804, 853, 897, 907, 1888
Diminishing ..	538, 591, 592
Discouraged by Proposed Duties ..	805, 811, 881, 1485, 1495, 1581, 1642-1643
From Ireland ..	596, 623, 625, 707, 749, 764, 776, 786, 897, 915, 1495, 1553, 1582, 1665, 1681
To Colonies ..	339, 890, 896, 1444, 1843
EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT ..	1459
EMPLOYMENT ..	12, 239, 338-344, 545, 566, 580, 588, 596, 608, 620, 709, 829, 869, 961, 1106, 1198, 1482, 1520, 1535, 1667
Decreased Through Imports ..	301, 327, 801, 847, 1167, 1179, 1284, 1299, 1331, 1437-1439, 1441-1444
Decreased through Increased Pasture ..	614, 740, 767, 825, 1032, 1485, 1501
Increased by Proposed Duties ..	214, 266, 286, 318, 526, 536, 573, 578, 608, 753, 762, 765, 773, 778, 805, 806, 808, 842, 843, 855, 881, 887, 946, 974, 996, 1019, 1023, 1026-1028, 1050, 1053, 1058, 1081, 1083, 1090, 1125, 1138, 1481, 1483, 1487-1489, 1491-1493, 1498-1499, 1511, 1573, 1641, 1646, 1655, 1715, 1740, 1750, 1760, 1789, 1830
On Bacon ..	1124, 1517
Flour ..	564, 1169, 1292, 1331, 1355, 1438, 1444, 1551-1552, 1554, 1584, 1597, 1650-1651, 1661, 1668, 1684, 1691, 1700-1701, 1703-1704, 1708-1709, 1713, 1715, 1717, 1726, 1728, 1733, 1739, 1740, 1743, 1745, 1746, 1747, 1749, 1750, 1753, 1755, 1757
Hops ..	1002, 1058, 1063, 1086
Manufactured Goods ..	887, 1762
Margarine ..	1520-1522
Meat and Dairy Produce ..	1876, 1910-1911, 1913, 1933, 1971, 1990
Oilcake ..	1432, 1512
Wheat ..	769, 1184, 1500, 1503, 1505, 1552, 1557, 1562, 1612, 1694, 1756, 1863, 1932
Scarcity of ..	323, 339, 499, 514, 524, 539, 592, 622, 701, 794, 826, 842, 846, 1024, 1164, 1196, 1222

EMPLOYMENT IN

Bacon Curing ..	119, 1124, 1135, 1150, 1441, 1517
Best Sugar Industry ..	563, 1200, 2013 <i>et seq.</i>
Cattle Industry ..	1900, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1933, 1971, 1985, 1990
Dairying ..	319, 734, 931, 1784
Dead Meat Industry ..	600, 602, 899, 1098, 1443, 1784, 1894, 1910, 1911, 1913, 1919, 1921
Flax Industry ..	890, 1192, 1696
Fruit Growing ..	340, 344, 906, 950, 959, 966, 968, 983
Hop Growing ..	340, 873, 1002, 1013-1014, 1018, 1032, 1046, 1074, 1079, 1086, 1088, 1080, 1377
Market Gardening ..	257, 591, 1514, 2003
Milling ..	592, 819, 821, 885, 1165, 1347, 1437, 1439, 1440, 1441, 1443, 1489, 1498, 1506, 1508, 1511, 1533, 1544, 1546, 1582, 1616, 1710, 1752
Starch Trade ..	739, 1438
Tillage ..	587, 591, 1560
Wheat-Growing ..	1125, 1438, 1485, 1549, 1665, 1673
ENNISCORTHY ..	524, 850
ENNISKILLEN ..	909
EPIZOOTIC LYMPHANGITIS ..	633
ESSEX ..	242, 884, 1151, 1254, 1312, 1454-1455
EVESHAM ..	254-255, 268-269, 348, 370, 954, 1145
EWES—See also <i>Barren</i> —, ..	514, 883, 937
EWES MUTTON ..	1395
EXCISE DUTY ON—	
Beer ..	382, 649, 1490, 1732, 1848
Tobacco ..	807, 1198
EXPERIMENTAL FARMING ..	294, 367, 530, 570, 593, 606, 989, 1030, 1072, 1109, 1127
EXPORT ..	12-27, 106-107, 218, 1048, 1356, 1389, 1417, 1436, 1780, 1993
Of Bacon and Hams ..	297-298, 300, 1103, 1119, 1122, 1129, 1132, 1133, 1389, 1421, 1518, 2007, 2009
Cattle ..	279, 314, 599, 771
Coal ..	1421, 1452
Bran ..	1170-1171, 1177, 1271, 1434
Flour ..	1304, 1427, 1436, 1529, 1606, 2008
Fruit ..	267, 949, 982, 1420
Hops ..	1055, 1377-1378, 1492, 2005, 2011
Horses ..	279, 591, 925, 1967
Lard ..	301, 1423, 1436
Linseed Oil ..	1418, 1423, 1428, 1432-1433, 1436, 1441, 1511, 2001, 2008, 2009
Margarine ..	1403, 1417, 1428, 1434, 1834
Meat ..	517, 1387, 1426
Oatmeal ..	1417, 1420, 2010, 2012
Offals ..	291-292, 376, 582, 1170-1171, 1179, 1180, 1184, 1347, 1623, 1655, 1904
Potatoes ..	217, 504, 510, 597, 1418, 2001, 2002, 2007-2008
Seeds ..	1419, 1523, 2003
Sheep ..	277, 279, 856, 1841
Starch ..	327, 742, 1365, 1423, 2004, 2005, 2010
To Colonies ..	1103, 1122, 1133, 1518, 1867, 2006, 2009, 2011-2012
Continent ..	279, 582, 1171, 1179, 1180, 1271, 1347, 1421, 1426, 1432, 1655
France ..	1103, 1119, 1132, 1133, 1436, 2003, 2005
U.S.A. ..	504, 510, 597, 982, 1133, 1419, 1420, 1834, 1904, 2001-2004, 2007-2008
Restricted by Colonial Tariffs ..	302-303, 1103, 1122, 2009, 2011-2012
Foreign Tariffs ..	302, 597, 949, 1103, 1129, 1133, 1387, 1417-1436, 1542, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012
Stopped by Foreign Tariffs ..	742, 964, 1055, 1082, 1105, 1122, 1129, 1142, 1365, 1377-1378, 1403, 1417-1436, 1441, 1492, 1591, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008-2011

FACTORY —See also <i>Margarine</i> —, <i>Mills</i> , <i>Woollen</i> —, ..	310, 313, 805, 806, 880, 1400, 1401, 1404, 2012
FACTORY ACTS ..	1319, 1408, 1459
FACTORY INSPECTION ..	1407
FAIRS ..	605, 759, 917
FALLOWING ..	687, 755
FAMILY LABOUR ..	509, 874, 939, 1052, 1110
FARM—See also <i>Pasture</i> —, ..	604, 638, 686, 712, 743, 803, 925, 1110, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
FARM BUILDINGS ..	874, 904, 913, 1228
FARM HORSES ..	586
FARM LABOURER ..	588, 711, 896-897, 902, 912, 1017-1018, 1164, 1183, 1233, 1557, 1794
FARM LAND ..	1152, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
FARM MACHINERY ..	1490
FARM PRODUCE ..	356, 532, 1226, 1239, 1406, 1891
Foreign Competition at Home ..	730, 799, 926, 942, 1282 <i>et seq.</i> , 1428, 1451, 1555, 1674, 1677, 1777, 1788, 1803, 1807, 1818-1819, 1822, 1826, 1835, 1843-1844, 1848, 1850, 1853-1857, 1886
Import Duty suggested ..	941, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1778, 1791, 1808
Of Little Benefit ..	608, 1544, 1550, 1603, 1611, 1614 <i>et seq.</i> , 1707, 1775, 1777, 1797-1798, 1812, 1818, 1833, 1842 <i>et seq.</i> , 1856, 1860
Of no Benefit ..	547, 1497, 1526, 1528-1529, 1560, 1576, 1615, 1622, 1628 <i>et seq.</i> , 1699, 1847 <i>et seq.</i> , 1864-1865
Prices ..	614, 740, 756, 795, 899, 919, 920, 944, 1501, 1505, 1525, 1566, 1593, 1635, 1641, 1709, 1784, 1800, 1814, 1844, 1848, 1861, 1865, 1873, 1882, 1890
FARM RENT ..	712, 731, 1080, 1082, 1494, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
FARM TRAINING ..	495, 691, 891, 932, 1127
FARMER—See also <i>Bankrupt</i> —, <i>Pastoral</i> —, <i>Small</i> —, ..	493
<i>et seq.</i> , 890, 895, 924, 933, 935, 1127, 1506-1507, 1708, 1778, 1816-1817, 1837, 1858, 1865, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
Benefited by Agricultural Rates Act ..	546, 616, 620, 904, 1017
Benefited by Proposed Duties ..	823, 887, 935, 1494-1495, 1532, 1550, 1557, 1580, 1582, 1587, 1609, 1702, 1708, 1772, 1774, 1777-1778, 1780-1784, 1794-1795, 1799, 1802, 1815-1816, 1820, 1827, 1830-1831, 1837, 1847, 1857, 1859, 1861, 1875, 1879, 1889, 2003
On Bacon ..	1777, 1876
Butter ..	1775, 1782, 1786
Cattle ..	1775, 1786, 1800
Dairy Produce ..	1772, 1793, 1794, 1811, 1860, 1889
Flour ..	290, 710, 913, 1528, 1575-1577, 1584, 1706, 1745
Meat ..	1198, 1777, 1779, 1782, 1794, 1801, 1805, 1857, 1887
Wheat ..	1500, 1553, 1590-1591, 1700, 1710
Injured by Railway Rates ..	530, 1448, 1451, 1453-1454, 1827
FARMERS' CLUBS ..	276, 1039
FARMERS' BUDGET ..	738
FARMERS' SUPPLY ASSOCIATIONS ..	1244, 1251
FARMING—See also <i>Bonanza</i> —, <i>Dairy</i> —, <i>Sheep</i> —, ..	
<i>Winter</i> —, ..	219, 356, 372, 493 <i>et seq.</i> , 895, 897, 905, 924, 1496, 1528-1529, 1808
Abroad ..	602, 611, 721, 724, 737, 745, 823, 1039, 1142, 1435
Co-operation in ..	730, 894, 898, 1812
Labour Cost ..	783, 930, 944, 1485, 1799, 1850
Profits ..	609, 629, 739, 895, 921-922, 929, 1485, 1797, 1800, 1806, 1830, 1832, 1927
FARMYARD MANURE ..	671
FAT ..	310, 723, 919, 1113, 1780, 1888
FAT CATTLE ..	530, 1101, 1891, 1906, 1922, 1942
Import ..	599, 1363, 1412, 1719, 1833, 1924, 1970

		Paragraph
FAT CATTLE—continued.		
Import Duty suggested ..	752, 836, 855, 1493, 1519, 1536, 1559, 1775, 1779, 1794, 1792, 1861, 1875, 1949	
Prices ..	537, 749, 807, 890, 893, 930, 1519, 1776, 1786, 1790, 1802, 1805, 1806, 1811, 1819, 1888, 1895, 1922, 1976	
FEEDING BARLEY ..		
	381, 517, 587, 694, 726, 919, 1101, 1105, 1124, 1130, 1138, 1142, 1148, 1152, 1198, 1546, 1594, 1650-1651, 1736	
Prices ..	775, 850, 1148, 1294, 1341, 1526	
Import Duty suggested ..	936, 1115, 1138, 1141, 1150, 1491, 1506-1507, 1517, 1574, 1639, 1713, 1764	
Undesirable ..	211, 573, 649, 1148-1149, 1150, 1490, 1496-1497, 1526, 1589, 1701, 1732, 1767, 1876	
Superior to Maize ..	1074, 1101, 1115, 1123, 1124, 1141, 1149	
FEEDING STUFFS—See also Cattle Food, Clover, Feeding Barley, Fodder, Lucerne, Malt-coombs, Offals, Oilcakes, Pig-food, Sheep-food ..		
	318, 560, 563, 573, 808, 892, 1296, 1449, 1529, 1568, 1602, 1630, 1805	
Co-operative Buying ..	328, 833, 880, 885, 898, 917, 922, 989, 1072, 1244, 1246, 1247, 1248, 1250, 1252	
Import ..	228, 292, 817, 885, 1155-1156, 1283, 1322, 1412, 1435, 1703, 1741, 1872	
Import Duty suggested ..	757, 817, 1322, 1499	
Undesirable ..	573, 936, 1115, 1157, 1491, 1495, 1504, 1528, 1553, 1602, 1612, 1626, 1630, 1634, 1660, 1665, 1690, 1707, 1719, 1724, 1771, 1846, 1876	
Prices ..	213, 382, 517-518, 586, 773, 817, 820, 850, 1118, 1363, 1505, 1526, 1529, 1537, 1566, 1592, 1602, 1620, 1622, 1626, 1630, 1642, 1660, 1694, 1706	
Raised by Proposed Duties on Corn, &c. ..	1529, 1586, 1619, 1625-1626, 1628, 1636, 1638, 1645, 1663, 1849, 1853	
Reduced by Proposed Duty on Flour ..	290, 817, 837, 1536, 1548, 1567, 1574, 1579, 1618, 1632, 1684, 1693, 1703, 1704, 1731	
Supply Increased by Proposed Duties on Corn, &c. ..	757, 1533, 1538, 1540, 1546-1547, 1593, 1603, 1687	
FEMALE LABOUR ..		
	344, 552, 633, 684, 775, 873, 897, 1848, 2003	
Abroad ..	572, 1201	
Scarcity ..	534, 538, 604, 614, 776, 833, 916	
Wages ..	566, 775	
FENCING ..	752, 850	
FEN LAND ..	543, 566	
FERMANAGH ..	264, 905-910	
FERTILISERS—See also Manure ..		
	509, 511-512, 555, 830, 1058, 1166-1167, 1235, 1245	
FIFESHIRE ..	504-508, 1233-1234, 2002	
FINANCE—See Capital, Credit, Dividends, Gold Standard, Government Banks, Government Loans, Insurance, Interest, Loans, Rates and Taxes, Working Expenses.		
FIRKIN BUTTER ..		
	311, 804, 879, 880	
FLAX ..		
Import ..	232, 727, 1124, 1185-1193	
Import Duty Suggested ..	232-234, 727, 1185, 1192	
Marketing ..	541, 1643, 1696	
Prices ..	234, 529, 727, 1185	
	233-234, 1186, 1235	
FLAX GROWING ..		
	141, 232, 235-237, 1185-93	
Decline ..	140, 232, 233, 234, 534, 538, 727, 905, 1185, 1187, 1192-1193	
Employment in ..	1186, 1188, 1192, 1696	
Experiments in Ireland ..	235, 1187-1188, 1190, 1193	
In Belgium ..	1187-1188, 1190-1191, 1193	
Labour Difficulties ..	232-234, 1186, 1188	
Profits ..	233-235, 538, 1186	
FLAX SEED ..		
	235-237, 727, 1186-1187, 1193	
FLAX RETTING ..		
	234-237, 1186-1191	

		Paragraph
FLAX SCUTCHING ..		
	234-236, 727, 1186-1188	
FLAX SPINNING ..		
	233-234, 890, 1185, 1192	
FLOUR—See also Corn—, Maize—, Mixed— ..		
	26, 321, 532, 754, 761, 849, 1075, 1151 <i>et seq.</i> , 1172-1173, 1178, 1251, 1297, 1319, 1325, 1340, 1344, 1412, 1529, 1635, 1744, 1759	
Cost of Production ..	532, 1298, 1319, 1529, 1746	
Dumping ..	1184, 1304, 1308, 1311, 1316, 1317, 1345	
By U.S.A. ..	325-326, 591, 1166, 1178, 1236, 1290, 1302, 1313-1314, 1316, 1320, 1321, 1324, 1327, 1332-1336, 1340-1341, 1345-1348, 1356, 1744-1745	
Export ..	1177, 1304, 1439, 1606	
Foreign Competition at Home ..	532, 636, 742, 831, 890, 917, 1298-1363, 1412, 1442, 1467-1468, 1476, 1497, 1527, 1535, 1538, 1679, 1717-1718, 1743, 1745, 1747, 1757, 1758	
In Neutral Markets ..	1166, 1411, 1413, 1436	
Foreign Import Duties ..	1301, 1341, 1344, 1349, 1392, 1427, 1434, 1435, 2008	
Freight Rates ..	1072, 1338, 1469, 1177-1178, 1312-1313, 1316, 1325, 1458, 1461, 1703, 1751	
French Drawback on ..	325, 1301, 1309, 1314, 1325, 1328, 1331, 1744	
Import ..		
	53, 163-168, 324-325, 758, 761, 1166, 1179, 1237, 1300-1309, 1314, 1316, 1320, 1322, 1327, 1332, 1335, 1337-1338, 1346, 1349, 1350, 1437, 1475, 1533, 1741, 1744, 1757-1758	
Below Cost ..	1174, 1306, 1309, 1310, 1313, 1315-1318, 1320, 1324, 1327-1329, 1330, 1332, 1335-1339, 1341-1343	
Below our Cost ..	1283, 1297, 1301, 1306, 1309, 1311, 1316, 1320, 1321, 1322, 1324, 1326, 1334-1335, 1340-1342, 1349, 1350, 1747	
Below our Price ..	1305, 1312, 1314, 1327, 1339, 1476, 1745	
Below Price in Country Exporting ..	1167, 1178, 1300, 1304-1305, 1308, 1325, 1327-1328, 1338, 1340, 1346, 1741	
Beneficial ..	1305, 1320, 1332, 1346-1347	
Diminishes Offal Supply ..	779, 872, 885, 1155-1156, 1302, 1612	
Declining ..	1166-1167, 1170, 1299, 1303, 1345	
Increases Offal Price ..	1154-1155, 1317, 1334, 1391, 1571, 1622, 1726, 1766	
Increasing ..	592, 802, 1326, 1328, 1340	
Import Duty Suggested ..		
	393, 1532 <i>et seq.</i>	
Beneficial to Subsidiary Trades ..	1180, 1574, 1624, 1639, 1663, 1669, 1720, 1736	
By Whom Paid ..	1588, 1740	
Colonial should be Taxed ..	1169, 1652, 1723, 1751	
Desirable ..	21, 29, 30, 210, 290, 501, 532, 608, 801, 831, 855, 878, 1147, 1164, 1306, 1331, 1483, 1518, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1621, 1646, 1695, 1706, 1710-1711, 1714, 1716-1717, 1719, 1728, 1744-1748, 1750, 1756, 1759, 1760, 1863	
Encourages Grain Imports ..	1154, 1346, 1553, 1709, 1717	
Higher Duty Desired ..	532, 704, 769, 821, 1025, 1331, 1355, 1489, 1491, 1570, 1606, 1609, 1650, 1653, 1658 <i>et seq.</i> , 1698-1699, 1700, 1702-1703, 1707, 1710-1712, 1715, 1722, 1728, 1730, 1731, 1733	
Higher than on Corn ..	501, 517, 547, 602, 694, 789, 793, 805, 817, 821, 855, 861, 872, 888, 913, 919, 934, 936, 953, 1073, 1125, 1169, 1174, 1180, 1183, 1489, 1501, 1503, 1524, 1534-1535, 1540, 1549, 1550, 1581, 1598, 1613, 1645, 1651, 1655-1656, 1664, 1666, 1668, 1669, 1674, 1676, 1681, 1684-1686, 1697, 1700-1709, 1713, 1716-1722, 1728-1729, 1731, 1739, 1740, 1752, 1755-1756, 1876	

FLOUR, Import Duty Suggested—*continued*.

Increases Offal Supply ..	694, 769, 913, 1125, 1147, 1183, 1528, 1538, 1553, 1558, 1562, 1564, 1568, 1570, 1574, 1581, 1591, 1651, 1668, 1673-1675, 1678, 1684, 1689, 1690, 1695, 1699, 1703, 1706-1707, 1708, 1710, 1713, 1716-1718, 1723-1724, 1728-1729, 1730-1731, 1733, 1750
Reduces Price of Offals ..	517, 789, 837, 928, 1131, 1489, 1535, 1540, 1545-1546, 1552, 1566-1568, 1573-1574, 1585-1587, 1593-1594, 1618, 1632, 1644, 1646, 1654, 1662, 1670, 1688, 1693, 1698-1699, 1705-1706, 1708, 1710-1711, 1713, 1716-1722, 1725-1728, 1731, 1749, 1753, 1755
Restricts Dumping ..	1346, 1505, 1715, 1752
Undesirable ..	582, 1310, 1345, 1524, 1529, 1632-1633, 1635, 1727, 1756, 1758, 1759, 1991
Preference to Colonies ..	30, 34, 1179, 1180, 1562, 1591, 1597, 1643, 1866
Prices ..	376, 379, 746, 1160, 1171-1172, 1326, 1535, 1633, 1715
Increased by Proposed Duty	1498, 1502, 1526, 1532, 1556, 1687, 1724, 1750, 1753, 1756, 1866
Not increased by Proposed Duty	497, 881, 1180, 1186, 1489, 1599, 1605, 1608, 1691, 1715, 1737, 1741, 1744, 1746, 1748-1749, 1753-1754, 1771
Of Imported ..	1299, 1300, 1303, 1308, 1319, 1328, 1330, 1332-1333, 1337-1338, 1341, 1343
Reduced by Import ..	1287, 1292, 1309, 1329, 1505, 1760
Quality ..	762, 1177, 1179, 1291-1292, 1301, 1307, 1319, 1321, 1323, 1329, 1342, 1345-1346, 1516, 1758
Registration Duty was Beneficial	1164, 1289, 1290, 1302, 1317, 1345, 1480, 1739, 1748, 1759, 1761
FLOUR MILL ..	1176-1177, 1300, 1348, 1350
Closed through Flour Imports	627, 821, 884, 1173, 1301, 1331, 1333, 1342, 1356, 1533-1534, 1726, 1757-1758
In U.S.A. ..	1308, 1329, 1338
FLOUR MILLING ..	759, 1151 <i>et seq.</i> , 1178, 1294, 1337, 1348, 1598, 1732
Benefited by Proposed Duty ..	564, 582, 694, 789, 821, 836, 855, 1137, 1154, 1175, 1323, 1438, 1490, 1544, 1548, 1551-1552, 1555, 1559, 1561, 1573-1578, 1580, 1584-1587, 1589, 1590, 1603, 1608, 1616, 1630, 1642, 1650, 1657, 1663, 1665-1667, 1671, 1685, 1693, 1696-1698, 1700, 1704-1705, 1710, 1714-1715, 1718, 1720, 1724-1725, 1729, 1730, 1732, 1734, 1739, 1742, 1745-1747, 1753-1754, 1756-1758
Decreased through Flour Imports ..	799, 801, 1173, 1349, 1350, 1467, 1581, 1679, 1688, 1735, 1741, 1745
Employment in ..	532, 1309, 1347
Decreased through Flour Imports	801, 1167, 1179, 1299, 1314, 1437, 1439, 1442, 1475, 1549
Increased by Proposed Duty ..	773, 1180, 1292, 1355, 1438, 1443-1444, 1506, 1554, 1584, 1597, 1661, 1684, 1691, 1701, 1703-1704, 1708-1713, 1717, 1726, 1728, 1738-1739, 1743, 1745, 1747, 1753, 1757, 1878
Methods ..	1165, 1167-1168, 1173, 1303, 1736, 1758
Profits ..	919, 1173, 1284, 1304, 1339, 1340, 1342-1344, 1348, 1556, 1679, 1759
FLOUR MIXING	919, 1292, 1310, 1330, 1342, 1347, 1524
FLOWERS—See also <i>Roses</i> ..	259, 266, 943-944, 993-996, 1380-1381, 1385, 1419, 1478, 1515
FLOWER SEEDS ..	1380
Foals ..	879

FODDER ..	1530, 1634
FOOD AND DRUGS ACT ..	1406, 1414
"FOOD OF THE POOR" ..	287, 295, 304, 1123, 1138, 1139, 1148, 1150
FOOD STUFFS—See also under Specified names	13, 19, 52, 83, 158-160, 590, 1292, 1419
Import Duty Suggested	526, 616, 689, 709, 1745
Undesirable ..	952, 1114, 1565, 1659, 1727, 1803, 1817-1818, 1850, 1991
Would Raise Price ..	811, 1632, 1817
Would not Raise Price ..	762, 769, 806, 862, 1504, 1580, 1608, 1646, 1852
FOOD SUPPLY ..	15, 355, 357, 389, 1446, 1473, 1501
FOOD SUPPLY IN TIME OF WAR ..	373-374, 1169, 1180, 1742
FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE ..	663-664, 1951, 1955
FOREIGN ADVANTAGES—See also <i>Comparative</i> ..	268, 301, 316, 327, 334, 359, 360, 376, 388, 823, 1127, 1129, 1290, 1349, 1401, 1872
Climate ..	494, 687, 768, 993, 996
Education ..	511, 540, 737, 1109, 1122
Freight Rates ..	303, 322, 370, 386, 525, 539, 556, 660, 672, 730, 767, 782, 820, 822, 854, 952, 977, 1046, 1071, 1120, 1136, 1178, 1293, 1351-1352, 1392, 1405, 1411-1412, 1458-1459, 1461, 1470, 1612, 1647, 1652, 1658, 1796, 1844, 1872, 1891, 1897
Rates and Taxes ..	648, 775, 1830
Rent ..	764, 853, 926, 1073, 1128, 1297, 1356, 1787, 1834, 1844
Wages ..	831, 939, 1364, 1392, 1396, 1398, 1408, 1505, 1516
FOREIGN COMPETITION ABROAD ..	1415, 1417, 1433, 1436
FOREIGN COMPETITION AT HOME—See also <i>Dumping</i> ..	665, 730, 798, 853, 926, 964, 1254 <i>et seq.</i> , 1283 <i>et seq.</i> , 1446, 1478, 1488, 1520, 1647, 1679, 1801, 1837, 1844, 1864, 1882
Assisted by Freight Rates ..	209, 550, 858, 880, 889, 909, 1046, 1110, 1142, 1278, 1312, 1316, 1325, 1328, 1352, 1358, 1426, 1447, 1467, 1766, 1781, 1796, 1799, 1834, 1844, 1864
Causes Agricultural Decline ..	224, 647, 705, 764, 767, 799, 847, 889, 926, 944, 1182, 1231, 1283, 1451, 1547, 1555, 1578, 1677, 1719
Closes Home Mills ..	821, 831, 884, 890, 917, 1280, 1307, 1312, 1314, 1343, 1350, 1352, 1364, 1430, 1440, 1535, 1538, 1672, 1686, 1736, 1743, 1757, 1758
Decreases Home Profits ..	256, 259, 499, 595, 603, 749, 766, 798, 846, 930, 949, 1009, 1024, 1091, 1093, 1232, 1237
Injures Home Industry ..	885, 1180, 1317, 1467, 1475, 1505
Reduces Home Prices ..	204, 248, 339, 532, 632, 656, 709, 719, 742, 755, 767, 770, 775, 802, 809, 818, 910, 917, 928, 930, 983, 1022, 1194, 1233, 1283, 1395, 1777, 1786, 1821
Restricts Home Employment ..	847, 942, 1439, 1440, 1442, 1510
From Argentine Republic ..	550, 599, 709, 745, 758, 890, 1356, 1812, 1830
Austria-Hungary ..	741, 1261, 1322, 1328, 1365-1366
Belgium ..	550, 558, 938, 968, 1260
Denmark ..	335, 540, 889, 1103, 1118-1119, 1126-1127, 1132-1136, 1149, 1263, 1374, 1392, 1404, 1515, 1524
France ..	208, 216, 229, 258, 322, 325, 550, 556, 558, 660, 813, 904, 938, 943, 963, 965-966, 990, 1256-1257, 1305, 1310, 1314, 1325, 1342, 1355, 1374, 1433, 1515
Germany ..	207, 224, 326, 550, 597, 966, 1080, 1257, 1293, 1352, 1366, 1433
Holland ..	209, 550, 558, 938-939, 966, 1129, 1258, 1293, 1352, 1381, 1405, 1440
Italy ..	904, 1262, 1433
Japan ..	1265

FOREIGN COMPETITION AT HOME—continued.

Paragraph

From Russia ..	207, 1118, 1259, 1356-1357, 1360, 1433, 1574
Spain	1263
Sweden	1263
Turkey	1264
U.S.A. ..	207, 259, 260, 279, 300, 301, 327, 550, 597, 758, 775, 833, 955, 1104, 1118, 1124, 1126, 1131, 1136, 1255, 1278, 1293, 1295, 1300, 1308-1316, 1322, 1324, 1327, 1335, 1338-1340, 1344-1346, 1351-1357, 1361-1362, 1388, 1400, 1409, 1467-1468, 1476, 1513, 1574, 1758, 1783, 1812, 1830, 1926
In Bacon ..	1103-1105, 1111-1112, 1119, 1123, 1126-1127, 1132-1134, 1141-1142, 1147, 1149, 1170, 1389-1394, 1441, 1515-1516, 1524, 1526, 1836, 1842
Barley ..	568, 575, 649, 709, 885, 930, 1283, 1296, 1352, 1496, 1505, 1507, 1634
Beef ..	505, 590, 603, 749, 755, 770, 773, 914, 930, 1093, 1194, 1388, 1395, 1807, 1852, 1926
Bulbs ..	993, 996, 1380-1381
Butter ..	312, 540, 714, 764, 802, 845, 917, 1395, 1401, 1439, 1777, 1786, 1803, 1821, 1826
Cattle ..	664, 709, 758, 801, 809, 818, 919, 983, 1093, 1412, 1719, 1779, 1780, 1786, 1809, 1830, 1854, 1920
Dairy Produce ..	312, 576, 580, 599, 906, 1395-1396, 1888
Eggs ..	1401, 1521
Feeding Stuffs ..	820, 1296, 1367, 1370
Flax ..	534, 727, 1185
Flour ..	532, 636, 742, 831, 890, 917, 1298-1363, 1412, 1442, 1467-1468, 1476, 1497, 1527, 1535, 1538, 1717-1718, 1743, 1745, 1747, 1757-1758
Fruit ..	269, 340, 564, 775, 909, 910, 949, 952, 955, 958, 961, 963-970, 980, 990-991, 994, 1070, 1380 <i>et seq.</i> , 1454
Hay ..	227, 889, 930-931, 935, 1374, 1669, 1872
Hops ..	244, 247, 248, 389, 1003, 1009, 1021-1022, 1024, 1035, 1039, 1052, 1059, 1061, 1069, 1079, 1080, 1089, 1376-1379
Lard ..	1124, 1136, 1409, 1415
Maize ..	1548, 1617
Margarine ..	316, 1404, 1405, 1409, 1440
Meat ..	277, 281, 282, 285, 580, 719, 758, 762, 767, 798-799, 809, 890, 928, 983, 1091, 1385-1388, 1493, 1784, 1786-1787, 1800, 1808, 1812, 1818-1819, 1822, 1826, 1829, 1834, 1853, 1856, 1864, 1879, 1882, 1886, 1909, 1913, 1916, 1920, 1938, 1946, 1949, 1959, 1976, 1994, 1996, 1997
Mustard Seed ..	550, 813, 938
Oatmeal ..	532, 1278, 1293, 1351-1353, 1357-1358, 1360-1362, 1509
Oats ..	889, 1355-1357, 1362, 1489, 1505
Oilcake ..	1369-1371, 1430-1433, 1512
Potatoes ..	214, 550, 556, 597, 656, 660, 753, 813, 833, 889, 1795, 1872
Poultry ..	321, 901, 904
Roses ..	993, 996, 1515
Starch ..	741, 1280, 1364-1366, 1509-1510
Vegetables ..	209, 257, 551, 558, 564, 937-938, 941, 949, 995, 1514
Wheat ..	550, 575, 580, 632, 651, 671, 707, 745, 766, 794, 833, 865, 889, 1231, 1232, 1237, 1283, 1446, 1455, 1538, 1574, 1623, 1636, 1658
FOREIGN COMPETITION IN THE COLONIES ..	1104, 1389, 1410, 1411 <i>et seq.</i>
FOREIGN IMPORT DUTIES—See also <i>Dingley Tariff</i> , <i>McKinley Tariff</i> ..	364, 1417 <i>et seq.</i>
Advantageous to Countries Levying ..	504, 709, 831, 992, 1335, 1405, 1407, 1425, 1427, 1435, 1522, 2001
Assist Dumping ..	1055, 1039, 1305, 1366, 1406

FOREIGN IMPORT DUTIES—continued.

Paragraph

By whom Paid ..	1431, 1436
Effect on Prices ..	843, 1341, 1435
Facilitate Imports to U.K. ..	1301, 1345, 1369-1371, 1392, 1407, 1420, 1428, 1430, 1431, 1441
Prevent Exports ..	297-298, 327, 742, 964, 1055, 1082, 1105, 1122, 1129, 1142, 1365, 1377-1378, 1403, 1417-1436, 1441, 1492, 1591, 1683, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2008-2011
Restrict Exports ..	209, 217-218, 300, 302, 949, 1103, 1129, 1133, 1387, 1417-1436, 1542, 2001, 2005, 2009, 2012
Restrict our Industries ..	965, 1192, 1349, 1387, 1420, 1426, 1434, 2010
Retaliation Proposed ..	617, 892, 964, 1596, 1687, 1690, 1841
Suggested Reduction ..	218, 597, 602, 1055, 1678, 1721, 1766, 2001 <i>et seq.</i>
FOREIGN IMPORT DUTIES IN—	
Belgium ..	990, 1122, 1422, 1522, 2005
Denmark ..	1392
France ..	709, 843, 949, 962, 964-965, 980, 1103, 1301, 1344-1345, 1419, 1421-1426, 1435, 1454, 1542, 1891, 2003, 2005, 2007
Germany ..	381, 602, 843, 990, 1074, 1103, 1105, 1344-1345, 1356, 1405, 1407, 1421, 1423, 1431, 1522, 2001, 2005-2006, 2008-2012
Holland ..	1891
Portugal ..	2012
Russia ..	1291, 1420, 1425, 2005, 2010
Spain ..	1423, 1427, 2005
Sweden ..	1427, 2012
U.S.A. ..	504-506, 510, 602, 742, 820, 833, 1055, 1074, 1103, 1105, 1122, 1133, 1135, 1298, 1305, 1341, 1365, 1387, 1418-1422, 1431, 1510, 1591, 1678, 1721, 1766, 1841, 1958, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2010
FOREIGN IMPORT DUTIES ON—	
Bacon and Hams ..	1103, 1105, 1122, 1129, 1133, 1135, 1421, 1424, 2009, 2010
Flour ..	1301, 1341, 1344, 1349, 1392, 1427, 1434, 1435, 2008
Fruit ..	949, 962, 964-965, 980, 990, 1418, 1420, 1422, 1454
Hops ..	243, 244, 248, 1055, 1074, 1082, 1376-1378, 1426, 1492, 2005, 2011
Margarine ..	1403, 1405-1407, 1417, 1428, 1430, 1434, 1522
Oatmeal ..	1418, 1420, 2010, 2012
Oil ..	1369-1371, 1418, 1420, 1423, 1425, 1428, 1430-1433, 1441, 1512, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2009
Oil Cake ..	1370, 1431, 1441
Potatoes ..	504-506, 510, 602, 833, 1418, 1542, 1591, 1678, 2001
Seed ..	1419, 1425-1426, 1435, 2003
Starch ..	742, 1365-1366, 1423, 1510, 2005, 2010
Wheat ..	367, 709, 843, 1330, 1421-1422, 1424, 1427, 1435-1436, 1535, 1596, 1687, 1690
Wool ..	602, 820, 1721, 1766, 2010
FOREIGN MEATS ACT ..	1953
FOREIGN METHODS ..	358-364, 367-371, 386, 572, 727, 729, 741, 744, 763, 778, 927, 1094
FOREMEN ..	903, 996
FORFARSHIRE ..	1243, 1250, 1539
FORMS OF INQUIRY ..	8, 1205 <i>et seq.</i>
FOWLS—See also <i>Surrey</i> —, <i>Sussex</i> —, ..	321-322, 1253, 1283, 1399, 1541
FRAMLINGHAM ..	1153, 1154
FRANCE ..	85-91, 258, 267, 327, 334, 370, 388, 555, 975, 981, 990, 1065, 1127, 1292, 1415, 1424
Competition from ..	208, 216, 224, 229, 258
In Flour ..	322, 962, 966, 1256, 1400, 1433, 1435
Fruit ..	961, 963, 990
Hay ..	1355, 1374
Vegetables ..	550, 813, 938

Paragraph

FRANCE—continued.

Drawback on Flour in ..	1301, 1309, 1325, 1328
	1331, 1342
Dumping from ..	209, 1345, 1356, 1744, 1891
Exports to ..	218, 267, 962, 1105, 1119, 1132, 1133, 1436
Freight Rates..	556-558, 963, 972, 990, 1072, 1375, 1462-1464, 1470
Import from ..	85, 296, 313, 315, 889, 904, 915, 931, 943, 1376, 1381, 1406, 1421-1422, 1434, 1450, 1789, 1865
Flour ..	324-325, 1292, 1310, 1316, 1318, 1325-1326, 1328, 1330-1332, 1335-1338, 1344, 1744
Fruit ..	961, 963, 970, 974, 1454
Import Duties in ..	302, 709, 843, 949, 962, 964-965, 980, 1103, 1301, 1344-1345, 1419, 1421-1426, 1435, 1454, 1542, 1891, 2003, 2005, 2007
On Fruit..	962, 964-965, 980, 1422
Wheat ..	709, 843, 1422, 1424, 1435
Prices ..	1330, 1333, 1380, 1435, 1478, 1891
Wages ..	1301, 1302, 1343, 1396
FRAUDULENT TRADING—See also under <i>Beef, Dead Meat and Live Meat, "Imported sold as British"</i> 288, 1116, 1124, 1136, 1245, 1351-1353, 1356, 1361, 1395, 1515	
FREE IMPORTS ..	17, 20, 116, 710, 1321, 1331, 1844, 1873
FREE LAND..	853
FREE MASH TUB ..	575
FREE TRADE ..	35, 999, 1506, 1520, 1683
Desirable ..	1629, 1714, 1848
Injurious to our Industries..	1122, 1432, 1446, 1500, 1540
Injurious to Ireland ..	595, 689, 1494, 1697, 1853
FREEHOLDS ..	945, 1145, 1146, 1152
FREIGHT RATES—See also <i>Canal—, Railway—, Shipping—, Through—, Transport—</i> 48, 118, 227, 230, 291-292, 516, 929, 1375, 1446 <i>et seq.</i> , 1492, 1499	
Excessive in U.K. ..	231, 496, 516, 539, 907, 909, 1327, 1856
Facilitate Foreign Competition at Home ..	209, 216, 231, 550, 858, 880, 889, 909, 1046, 1110, 1142, 1278, 1312, 1316, 1325, 1328, 1352, 1358, 1426, 1447, 1467, 1766, 1781, 1796, 1799, 1834, 1844, 1864
From Colonies to U.K. ..	909, 979, 1230, 1375, 1465, 1614
Foreign Advantages in..	216, 525, 539, 556, 660, 672, 730, 767, 782, 820, 822, 854, 952, 977, 1046, 1071, 1120, 1136, 1178, 1293, 1351-1352, 1392, 1405, 1411-1412, 1458-1459, 1461, 1470, 1612, 1647, 1652, 1658, 1796, 1844, 1872, 1891, 1897
On Butter ..	539, 898
Cattle ..	749, 917, 1447, 1452, 1912, 1913
Flour ..	1072, 1338, 1469, 1177-1178, 1312-1313, 1316, 1325, 1458, 1461, 1703, 1751
Meat ..	1465-1466, 1909, 1945
Wheat ..	105, 113-114, 1458, 1703, 1751
On Exports from U.K. ..	539, 1136, 1178, 1419, 1430, 1612, 1841
FRESH BUTTER ..	804, 1400
FRESH MEAT ..	1465-1466, 1975
FRESH PORK ..	299, 1102, 1104 <i>et seq.</i> , 1130, 1142-1143
FROST ..	955-956, 1098
FROZEN BEEF ..	277, 757, 847, 1115, 1426, 1879, 1908, 1916, 1927, 1975, 1995
Foreign Competition at Home ..	890, 1809, 1910, 1976
Import Duty Suggested ..	756-757, 765, 1520, 1774, 1784, 1799, 1832
FROZEN MILK ..	1822
FROZEN MUTTON ..	277, 890, 1093, 1097-1098, 1115, 1824
FRUIT—See also <i>Bottled—, Bush—, Dried—, Glasshouse—, Hothouse—, Small—, Tinned—, Tree— and under Specified names</i> 260, 952 <i>et seq.</i> , 970, 976, 991, 1226	

Paragraph

FRUIT—continued.

Cold Storage ..	270, 955, 966
Export ..	267, 962
Foreign Competition at Home ..	258, 340, 949, 952, 963, 969, 970, 990, 994, 1385
Foreign Import Duty ..	949, 962, 964-965, 980, 990, 1418, 1420, 1422, 1454
Import ..	161, 265, 340, 949, 957-966, 969-975, 979, 983, 986, 990-992, 1025, 1075, 1283, 1291, 1383, 1385, 1454, 1513
Import Duty Suggested ..	258, 265, 267, 952-953, 960, 963-964, 966, 979, 1492, 1513
Effect on Imports ..	254, 564, 953, 964-966, 974, 979, 992
Industry ..	817, 951, 953, 965, 968-969, 974, 995, 1577
Prices ..	951, 964, 969, 974
Package Duty Desirable ..	965, 979, 983, 1514
Undesirable ..	265, 973, 979
Marketing ..	252, 253, 255, 259, 261, 263, 943, 950, 954, 963, 968, 988, 1024, 1514
Prices ..	254-255, 555, 949, 962, 970-974, 983, 986, 992
Railway Rates ..	962, 963, 972, 977, 987, 990, 995, 1071, 1453, 1454, 1457
Transport Facilities ..	622, 949, 954, 962, 977-978, 987-988, 1025, 1071
FRUIT BASKET INDUSTRY .. 962, 966	
FRUIT CANNING INDUSTRY .. 254, 340, 991	
FRUIT GRADING .. 555, 961	
FRUIT GROWERS—DRAFT QUESTIONS TO .. 482-485	
FRUIT GROWING .. 252-270, 760, 775, 785-786, 850, 904, 954, 973, 978, 992, 995	
Co-operation in ..	334, 555, 963, 968, 978, 1071, 1254
Education ..	907, 978, 989
Employment ..	266, 340, 344, 775, 906, 950, 959, 966, 968, 976, 983, 986-987, 991-992, 1229
Foreign Advantages ..	952, 973, 989
Increase in ..	253, 255, 266, 954, 961, 967, 970, 974, 975, 979, 984, 985, 991, 992
Labour Cost ..	340, 950-951, 969, 971, 987, 995
Methods ..	954, 973, 978, 983
Local Rates ..	904, 908, 952
On Small Holdings ..	987, 992, 1110, 1145, 2038
Profits ..	253, 763, 785, 949, 954-956, 968, 971, 975-976, 991, 1069, 1145
FRUIT GROWING UNDER GLASS ..	340, 948-949, 975
FRUIT JUICE ..	266, 991
FRUIT PACKING ..	978, 991
FRUIT PICKING ..	270, 340, 968
FRUIT PULP—See also <i>Apricot—, Plum—, Raspberry—, Strawberry—</i> 266, 958-960, 964, 976, 983, 986, 991, 1454	
FRUIT TREES ..	256, 259, 268, 968, 996, 1515
FUNGOID PESTS ..	1030
FUTURES ..	1329
GALWAY .. 332, 343, 727, 758-762, 1624	
GARDENERS .. 950, 1514	
GERMANY .. 109, 315, 381, 388, 989, 990, 1202, 1293, 1344	
Agricultural Methods .. 668, 741, 810, 958, 1049, 1065, 1121, 1303	
Beet-Growing ..	562, 563, 688, 1202, 2013 <i>et seq.</i>
Competition from ..	207, 208, 224, 296, 315, 322, 550, 597, 966, 1080, 1257, 1293, 1352, 1366, 1433
In Neutral Markets ..	1413, 1433, 1436
Dumping from ..	209, 315, 741, 742, 1337, 1356, 1367, 1380
Dutch Margarine Factories in ..	315, 1404, 1407, 1522
Exports from U.K. to ..	267, 1423, 2001, 2008, 2009
Free Imports into ..	962, 1356
Freight Rates ..	216, 263, 941, 957, 962, 1412, 1462-1464, 1467, 1470-1472
Hop-Growing in ..	1043, 1049, 1065, 1378

	Paragraph
GERMANY—continued.	
Import Duties in	302, 602, 843, 990, 1074, 1103, 1105, 1344-1345, 1356, 1405, 1407, 1421, 1423, 1431, 1522, 2001, 2005-2006, 2008-2012
Labour Conditions	1302, 1364, 1371, 1382, 1696
Milling Industry	1303, 1337, 1344, 1356, 1413
Prices	562, 741, 843, 1043, 1365, 1696
Starch Production	741-742
Traveller's Licences	1043, 1289
GHERKINS	937
GIBRALTAR	1415
GIST SHEEP	514
GLAMORGANSHIRE	343, 712
GLASGOW	255, 258, 263, 281, 323, 532, 677-690, 920-921, 975-979, 1093, 1095, 1304, 1308, 1313, 1341, 1353-1354, 1357, 1383, 1443, 1467, 1519, 1811
GLASSHOUSE	257, 264, 266, 949, 990, 994
GLASSHOUSE FRUIT	266, 948, 961
GLEANNING	517, 534
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	200, 220, 251, 268, 274, 301, 838-844, 985-994, 1226-1227, 1229, 1602, 1674
GLUCOSE	1115
GLUTEN	919, 1177
GOLD STANDARD	745
GOOSEBERRIES	253, 968, 976, 986, 1070
GOVERNMENT AID	258, 593, 1109, 1200, 1970, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
Abroad	258, 611, 990, 1112, 1117, 1142, 1392
For Education	593, 1351
Cottage Building	511, 606-607
In Colonies	1109, 1127
In Ireland	511, 896
GOVERNMENT BANKS	624
GOVERNMENT LOANS	360, 1110, 1666, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
GOVERNMENT INSPECTION	835
GRADING	334, 555, 955, 957, 961, 1096
GRAIN—See also <i>Dried—, Cereals, Crops</i> and Specified names	
17, 19, 20, 22, 26, 162-164, 221, 330, 548, 601, 605, 630, 685, 687, 726, 905, 1165, 1284, 1290, 1544, 1761	
Co-operative Selling	726, 1250
Foreign Competition at Home	798, 1283 <i>et seq.</i> , 1351
Foreign Import Duties	1417 <i>et seq.</i> , 1687
Freight Rates	926, 1072, 1288, 1462-1464, 1467-1469
Import	584, 602, 1155-1156, 1284, 1290-1291, 1469, 1534, 1742, 1766, 1855
Import Duty suggested	752, 756-757, 934, 1180, 1328, 1490, 1508, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1766, 1810, 1826
Undesirable	1289, 1355, 1488, 1505, 1634, 1636, 1685, 1731, 1739, 1866
Would Raise Price	1547, 1551, 1618, 1650
Would not Raise Price	602, 1503, 1594, 1603, 1641, 1721, 1766
Preference Suggested	30, 584, 1490, 1587, 1621, 1643 <i>et seq.</i> , 1868
Prices	685, 707, 808, 832, 1283, 1491, 1566
Sources of Supply	1271-1274
GRAIN COMBINATIONS	1474, 1480
GRAIN PRODUCTS	1488, 1866
Import Duty Desirable	1348, 1493, 1505, 1655, 1695, 1732, 1759, 1863
GRAIPES	1243
GRANARIES	953, 1017, 1566
GRANITE QUARRIES	499
GRAPE	267, 268, 980-982
Export	949, 962, 964, 982
Foreign Import Duty	962, 964-965, 980, 1454
Import	949, 965, 980-981, 982, 994, 1454
Prices	949, 981, 994
GRAPE GROWING	975, 980-982
GRASS—See also <i>Pasture</i>	651, 1224, 1228, 1374
GRASS FARMING	799, 874, 1806, 1825
GRASS-FEEDING	281, 758, 930, 1227, 1872
GRASS GROWING	931, 1046

	Paragraph
GRASS LAND	140, 219, 220, 272, 493, 504, 506, 784, 906, 1234, 1681
Employment on	614, 740, 825, 906, 1226, 1228, 1500, 1829
Labour Cost	500, 795, 893, 1223, 1228, 1485
Manuring	586, 755, 826
Profits	610, 691, 709, 784, 911
Proposed Duties Prevent Increase	887, 1495, 1501, 1539, 1729, 1763, 1878
Replaced Arable	354, 506, 591, 604, 609, 614, 638, 671, 825, 829, 833, 900, 1159, 1225-1230, 1233, 1485, 1590, 1768, 1791, 1884
Value	1182, 1194, 1223
GRASS ORCHARDS	253, 269, 955
GRASS SEED	225, 509, 1227
GRASS-FED BEEF	1780, 1891
GRAZING—See also <i>Cattle Fattening, Cattle</i>	
<i>Finishing, Cattle Raising</i>	224, 285, 290, 549, 624, 1195, 1231, 1497, 1531, 1589
Benefit by Proposed Duty	1787-1788, 1797, 1818, 1851, 1921, 1925, 1984
Injured by Imports	930, 1386-1387, 1830, 1937, 1985, 1994
Profits	275, 282, 591, 662, 699, 718, 758, 766, 770, 780, 785, 798, 915, 1070, 1194-1195, 1849, 1947
Replaces Tillage	611, 783, 804, 895, 1014, 1235, 1685, 1879, 1933
GRAZING LAND	914, 917, 1659, 1824, 1971
GREEN CROPS—See also under Specified names	136-138, 354, 587, 1221
GREEN MAIZE	687
GREEN RODS	907
GRISTING	322-323, 1342
GROVE FERRY	944
GUANO	728, 1630
GUILDFORD, SURREY	1226
GUM	1510, 2004

HALF-BRED SHORTHORNS	737
HAM—See also <i>Dry—</i>	1113, 1129, 1131, 1416, 1461, 2007
Exports Restricted by Foreign Tariffs	300, 1103, 1129, 1389, 1424, 2009
Foreign Competition at Home	300, 1113, 1124, 1126, 1389, 1390-1393
Import	300, 1104 <i>et seq.</i> , 1142, 1391, 1393-1394
Import Duty Suggested	1114, 1125, 1147, 1517- 1518, 1520, 1810
Imported should be Branded	1131, 1515
Prices	1120, 1127
HAMPSHIRE	201, 203, 220, 240, 264, 276, 336, 965, 1082-1083, 1345, 1450, 1643, 1736
HAND LABOUR	969
HAND-LOOM WEAVING	510
HARD WHEAT	1178
HARLESTON	1485
HARVEST	17-19, 343, 697, 744, 1270
Labour	538, 622, 749, 815, 859, 896
Wages Increased During	495, 534, 719, 791, 826, 839, 876, 884, 896, 903, 912, 916, 926
HAWKHURST	1079
HAY—See also <i>Timothy—</i>	228, 292, 624, 687, 758, 775, 785, 890, 895, 930, 932-933, 947, 1351, 1450, 1564
Exports Prevented by Foreign Tariffs	1424
Foreign Competition at Home	227, 229, 1292, 1355, 1374, 1450, 1497, 1669, 1872, 1918
Freight Rates	227, 230, 932-933, 1375, 1450, 1454, 1466
Import	228, 931, 1374-1375, 1402, 1614, 1872, 1918
Import Duty Suggested	394, 620, 934-935, 1530, 1619, 1669, 1695, 1697, 1725, 1728, 1763, 1780, 1872, 1918

HAY—Import Duty Suggested—continued.

Paragraph

Undesirable	1491, 1528, 1634
Prices .. 228-229, 508, 544, 759, 771, 785, 894, 930.	1070, 1402
Prices Ruled by Imports	227-229, 889, 921, 930-931, 1351, 1497
HAYMAKING	343, 495, 719, 826, 884, 931
HEATH LAND	1231
HEATHFIELD	875
HEDGE CUTTING	341, 767, 795, 814, 1072
HEIFERS	893, 1790, 1861, 1993
HEIGHINGTON	648
HENLEY	672
HEREFORD CATTLE	1096
HEREFORDSHIRE .. 200, 202, 219, 220, 253, 280, 283, 349,	968, 1061, 1063, 1618
Fruit Growing .. 257, 260, 268, 950, 956, 967-968	
Hop Growing .. 240, 242, 1061-1063, 1085-1086	
Cost of Production	1060-1061, 1085
Decreased	1060-1061, 1085-1086
Labour Supply	1061, 1085
Local Rates	968, 1062, 1086
HERTFORDSHIRE	935-936, 949, 950-951
HIDES .. 286, 288, 599, 805, 1098, 1493, 1519-1520,	1781, 1894, 1911, 1916, 1919, 1929, 1954
HIGHLAND BEEF	1096
HIGHLANDS	2010
HIGHWAY RATE	496, 536, 815, 817
HITCHIN	944
HOEING	868
HOG—See also Pig .. 299, 743, 915, 1109-1110, 1121,	1134, 1147, 1152
HOG FEEDING	1105, 1123, 1131
HOG PRODUCTS	306, 1109, 1112, 1476, 1797
HOLLAND .. 96-98, 334, 388, 1353, 1405-1407, 1436, 1522,	1780, 1891
Advantages of.. 673, 810, 939, 1110, 1293, 1352-1353,	1390, 1398, 1404-1405
Competition at Home from .. 208-209, 254, 322,	727, 803, 938-939, 957, 962, 966, 1192,
1259, 1286, 1367, 1384, 1389, 1467, 1985	
In Barley	1293, 1352
Bulbs	1380-1382, 1515
Cheese	1395, 1398
Fruit	970, 974
Margarine	1403-1409, 1834
Mustard	315, 550, 813
Pork .. 299, 883, 1123, 1130, 1149, 1788, 1915	
Potatoes	550, 941, 1872
Exports to	291-292, 990, 1169, 1180
Freight Rates.. 216, 1353, 1405, 1426, 1466, 1471, 1891	
HOLYHEAD	1095
HOME COMPETITION .. 207, 257, 841, 919, 920, 1056,	1166, 1296, 1463, 1740
In Milk	766, 921, 1070
Milling .. 1322, 1344, 1349, 1512, 1524, 1714,	1748, 1756, 1759
Potatoes	753, 1231
Reduces Profits	544, 600, 949, 1113-1114, 1163, 1409
HOME-GROWN STOCK	148, 801, 1784
HOPS—See also Dried—, Oasthouses .. 240, 389, 393, 698, 1013,	1020, 1023-1024, 1033-1034, 1043, 1051,
1054, 1061, 1085, 1711, 2011	
Acreage	141, 240, 1039, 1065, 1067, 1499
Decreased.. 140, 240, 242-243, 389, 1001, 1008-	1009, 1017, 1020-1021, 1027-1028, 1035,
1052, 1059-1060, 1069, 1074-1076, 1078-	1079, 1085-1086, 1088, 1712
Increased .. 241, 244, 997, 1003, 1009, 1010,	1017, 1030
Capital Invested .. 242, 998, 1001, 1004, 1009,	1010, 1012, 1014, 1017, 1020, 1022, 1025,
1028, 1030, 1034, 1037, 1047, 1050, 1052,	1054, 1057, 1063, 1065, 1076, 1080, 1083,
1088, 1090	
Cost of Production .. 245, 248, 998, 1006, 1025, 1032,	1039, 1057, 1069, 1076, 1088, 1090, 1593

HOPS—Cost of Production—continued.

Paragraph

Increased	244, 1013, 1032, 1049, 1076, 1080, 1082, 1085
Cultivation	240, 246-248, 249, 904, 998, 1008,
1013, 1020, 1023-1024, 1029, 1030, 1051,	1055, 1066, 1074, 1079, 1089, 1630
Decline	240, 1013, 1036, 1051, 1060, 1078,
1088-1089	
Improved Methods .. 244-246, 1035, 1065, 1079	
Increased Yield .. 240-241, 243-244, 1006, 1008,	1037, 1039, 1055, 1085
Foreign Competition at Home .. 247, 250, 1011,	1021, 1024, 1037, 1039, 1054-1055, 1062,
1082, 1086, 1090, 1375-1377, 1379	
Reduces Prices .. 244, 247-249, 1009, 1013, 1022,	1034, 1037, 1043-1044, 1052, 1055, 1069,
1080, 1082-1084, 1089, 1377-1378, 1492	
Foreign Growth	247, 1030, 1039, 1043, 1049,
1056, 1079, 1080, 1376	
Foreign Import Duty .. 243-244, 248, 1055, 1074,	1376-1377, 1378, 1426, 1492, 2005, 2011
Freight Rates.. 1001, 1003, 1022, 1024, 1043, 1072,	1079, 1457
Import .. 161, 241, 251, 389, 1006-1007, 1011, 1039,	1040-1041, 1043-1044, 1055, 1061-1062,
1069, 1081, 1083-1084, 1375-1376, 2011	
Reduces Home Growing .. 243, 1013, 1049,	1061, 1082, 1377-1379
Import Duty Suggested .. 249, 389, 394, 583, 1001, 1009,	1027, 1048, 1060, 1086, 1090, 1492-1493,
1593, 1705, 1712, 1763, 1770, 1805, 2005	
40s. per cwt. .. 250, 1025, 1028, 1031, 1034,	1037, 1044, 1050, 1053, 1058, 1062-1064,
1074, 1077, 1081, 1083, 1090	
Beneficial.. .. .	249, 999, 1000-1001, 1005-
1006, 1018, 1058, 1063, 1977	
Cultivation Encouraged by .. 249-251, 389, 999,	1001, 1005, 1008, 1011, 1018, 1023, 1025,
1027, 1031, 1034-1035, 1037, 1048, 1053,	1058, 1063, 1077, 1083, 1086, 1572, 1626
Imports Decreased by .. 249-251, 389, 1001,	1012, 1018, 1027
Labour Benefited by .. 249, 251, 389, 1002,	1007, 1011, 1035, 1038, 1058, 1063, 1086,
1572, 1626	
Undesirable	250, 999, 1005-1006, 1491
Imported should be marked .. 250, 1080, 1090	
Labour .. 244-245, 251, 340, 873, 968, 997, 1003,	1006, 1009, 1010, 1013, 1018-1019, 1022,
1031-1033, 1056, 1074, 1079, 1085-1090	
Plentiful .. 244, 997, 1014, 1024, 1085, 1087, 1089	
Market Controlled by Brewers .. 1004, 1020, 1022,	1061, 1062
Market Organisation .. 1004, 1020-2021, 1024,	1062, 1080, 1084
Preference .. 584, 1002, 1012, 1018, 1053, 1059,	1064, 1081
Prices .. 243, 246-249, 1013-1014, 1020, 1024, 1026,	1031, 1036, 1038, 1043, 1045, 1048-1049,
1053, 1058, 1061, 1063, 1077, 1079	1082, 1084
Unremunerative .. 241-243, 247-248, 250,	1001, 1003, 1005, 1008, 1012, 1014, 1021,
1024, 1036, 1038, 1055, 1061-1062, 1067,	1069, 1076-1077
Profits .. 244, 246-247, 249, 997, 1000, 1003, 1008,	1011, 1018, 1020, 1023, 1036, 1045
Decreased .. 1009, 1014, 1021, 1023-1024,	1027, 1036, 1051, 1060, 1067, 1075, 1078,
1082, 1085, 1087	
Increased .. 249, 1000, 1017, 1036	
Wages .. 1006, 1014, 1018, 1033, 1053, 1079,	1083, 1377
Increased .. 997, 1003, 1030, 1079,	1082, 1085
HOP CURING	245, 1001, 1004, 1012, 1018,
1049, 1069, 1079, 1084	
HOP GROWERS—Draft Questions to .. 479-482	

	Paragraph
HOP GRUBBING ..	241-242, 244, 1012, 1014, 1014-1016, 1021, 1027, 1036, 1045-1046, 1075, 1078-1079
HOP INDUSTRY—Possibility of Expansion ..	240-241, 243-245, 1005, 1026, 1032, 1039, 1050, 1053, 1055, 1064, 1074, 1076, 1077, 1086, 1088
HOP PICKING	244, 247, 340, 343, 1010, 1052, 1057
Labour Plentiful ..	1001, 1012, 1020, 1022, 1027, 1029, 1033, 1046, 1052, 1061, 1076, 1079, 1082
Wages in ..	245, 1004, 1010, 1018, 1052, 1074
HOP WASHING	243, 246-247, 1013, 1030, 1049, 1069, 1085, 1087
HORNS	288, 1098, 1781, 1911
HORSE—See also Cart—, Draught—, Farm—, Foals, Hunters, Mares, Plough—, Saddle—, Shire—, Stallions, Thoroughbreds, Van—, Young— ..	253, 290, 523, 529, 591, 657, 715, 748, 850, 925, 969, 987
Prices	523, 544, 850
HORSE-BREEDING ..	278, 543, 715, 725, 771, 850, 1967
In Ireland	523, 591, 630, 771, 784,
Profitable	784, 799, 925
Unprofitable	657, 748, 846
HORSE CLUB	715, 1254
HORSE FEEDING	278, 756, 911, 1105, 1115, 1283, 1677, 1689
HORSE KEEPERS	569, 701, 884, 1075, 1709
HORTICULTURE—See also Bulbs, Flowers, Plants, Shrubs ..	716, 993, 996
HORTICULTURAL CLASSES	570
HORTICULTURAL DEPARTMENT	907-908
HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE	259, 993, 996
HOTHOUSE FRUIT	267, 961, 994
HOURS OF LABOUR	316, 800, 829, 902, 1231, 1333, 1749
In Canada	1306, 1359
Denmark	1392, 1398
France	1301, 1315, 1342
Germany	1364, 1696
Holland	1293, 1353, 1398, 1404-1405, 1440
Russia	1295, 1372
U.S.A.	1306, 1309, 1313
Longer Abroad	1306, 1320, 1364, 1370, 1406, 1408, 1516-1517
Shorter at Home ..	545, 604, 658, 664, 791, 857, 868, 926, 939, 1106, 1300, 1313, 1443, 1689
HOUSE RENT	534, 1079
HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES ACT ..	349, 886
HULL	323, 970, 1095, 1170-1171, 1184, 1288
HUNGARY—See also Austria ..	685, 688, 741, 1313, 1320, 1327, 1328, 1462-1464
HUNTERS	523, 748, 846, 879, 921
HUNTINGDON AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY ..	654
HUNTINGDONSHIRE	200, 219, 363, 654-662
HYDRAULIC PRESSING	231, 932-933

ICKLESHAM, SURREY	1075
ILMINSTER, SOMERSET	1229
IMPLEMENT—See also Machinery ..	517, 989, 1111, 1140, 1240, 1625, 1645, 1663
IMPLEMENT MANUFACTURERS' FEDERATION ..	1072
IMPORT	158-160, 173, 256, 259, 260, 302, 310, 321, 327, 355, 494, 992, 1185, 1242, 1255 <i>et seq.</i> , 1446, 1483, 1765
Assisted by Differential Railway Rates ..	361-363, 535, 550, 556, 567, 578, 601, 615, 620, 640, 685, 767, 788, 794, 816, 858, 909, 926, 932-933, 941, 963, 965, 977, 1003, 1024, 1043, 1046, 1072, 1100, 1136, 1163, 1179, 1278, 1288, 1338, 1355, 1395, 1407, 1449, 1451-1464, 1467-1471, 1612, 1658, 1763, 1796, 1809, 1819, 1884, 1895, 1902, 1915

	Paragraph
IMPORT— <i>continued.</i>	
Below Our Cost ..	364, 1283, 1295, 1297, 1301, 1306, 1309, 1311, 1316, 1320-1324, 1326, 1334-1335, 1340-1342, 1349, 1350, 1357, 1361, 1363, 1370, 1372, 1381, 1384, 1391, 1393, 1398, 1410, 1747
Branding Desirable ..	289, 290, 762, 881, 958, 1090, 1771, 1819, 1827, 1885, 1912, 1918, 1926, 1940, 1954, 1957-1958, 1963, 1976-1977, 1980-1981, 1983, 1989, 1992 <i>et seq.</i>
Decreases Employment ..	801, 847, 1167, 1179, 1284, 1299, 1331, 1347, 1437-1439, 1441-1444, 1549, 1913
Decreasing ..	574, 592, 603, 1097, 1166-1167, 1170
Desirable	960, 1393, 1496
Of Cattle	504, 597-599, 766, 785, 789, 802, 1093, 1766, 1805, 1806, 1810, 1825, 1897, 1905, 1912-1915, 1919, 1945, 1956, 1988-1989
Corn	573, 1321, 1758
Meat	1922, 1930, 1939, 1949
Oilcake	1370, 1428, 1430
Sheep	597, 766
Decreases Home Profit ..	595, 766, 775, 809, 846, 949, 996, 1091, 1093, 1105, 1232, 1331, 1363, 1374, 1404, 1726, 1787, 1807, 1888, 1906, 1972, 1985, 1988
Increasing	52, 322, 564, 592, 802, 882, 970, 1104-1105, 1123, 1126, 1142, 1273, 1326, 1328, 1340, 1381-1383, 1838, 1934, 1966
Prevents Home Profits ..	550, 749, 766, 930, 952, 968, 1079, 1273, 1284, 1302, 1317, 1348, 1451, 1492, 1809, 1819, 1910
Reduces Home Prices ..	543, 957, 970, 1021, 1034, 1037, 1049, 1091, 1102-1103, 1105, 1114-1115, 1273, 1298, 1356, 1364, 1366, 1370, 1402, 1450, 1635, 1817
Restricted by Proposed Duties ..	607, 709, 804, 919, 953, 965, 983, 1001, 1012, 1018, 1027, 1034, 1053, 1114-1115, 1344, 1568, 1583, 1605-1606, 1614-1615, 1638, 1641, 1678, 1784, 1789, 1797, 1807, 1811, 1951
Sold as British Products ..	565, 756-757, 1099, 1105, 1111, 1123-1124, 1136, 1355-1356, 1515, 1772, 1819, 1894, 1926, 1942, 1952, 1964, 1986, 1993, 1997
Undersells Home Products ..	822, 1102-1103, 1119, 1283, 1286, 1288, 1297, 1305, 1312, 1314, 1327, 1339, 1350-1352, 1357, 1360, 1369, 1372, 1374, 1379, 1383, 1389, 1398, 1476, 1516, 1745
IMPORT OF APPLES ..	964, 979, 986, 991, 1069, 1260, 1385, 1515
Bacon	297-298, 300-301, 305-306, 522, 809, 1101, 1104-1105, 1116, 1123, 1142, 1391-1394
From Canada ..	724, 1102, 1113, 1116, 1118-1119, 1120, 1122, 1131-1132, 1135-1136, 1139, 1142, 1147, 1149, 1260, 1389, 1390-1391, 1393-1394, 1400, 1518, 1810
Denmark ..	1102, 1127, 1132, 1391-1392, 1515
U.S.A. ..	724, 809, 830, 881, 1113, 1129, 1392, 1836
Barley	169-171, 206, 521, 564, 568, 1198, 1237, 1273, 1283-1284, 1288, 1293-1294, 1304, 1352, 1356, 1674
Beans	1270, 1283
Beef	718, 914, 1093-1094, 1096, 1100, 1115, 1386-1388, 1539, 1774-1775, 1781, 1788, 1802, 1854, 1862, 1921, 1944, 1964, 1986-1987, 1997
Bran	592, 837, 1174, 1329, 1335, 1337, 1533
Bulbs	993, 996, 1380-1382, 1515

IMPORT OF *continued.*

Paragraph

Butter ..	313, 758, 1385, 1388, 1395-1399, 1400, 1477, 1782, 1812
From Colonies ..	909, 1075, 1112-1113, 1396, 1400, 1403, 1643
Denmark ..	1112, 1142, 1398, 1401, 1403, 1438, 1777, 1790, 1865
Russia ..	915, 1112, 1400
Carcasses ..	1136, 1900, 1927
Cattle ..	270, 280, 282, 547, 766, 1071, 1095-1096, 1539, 1788, 1815, 1908, 1917, 1924, 1933, 1949, 1952, 1955, 1976, 1989
Cheese ..	758, 1075, 1117, 1230, 1388, 1391, 1395-1396, 1398, 1400-1401, 1518, 1804, 1845
Cider ..	1383-1385
Condensed Milk ..	271, 314, 695, 1438
Corn ..	17, 26, 28, 30, 160, 162, 526, 592, 704, 745, 802, 844, 853, 882, 884, 919, 1075, 1159, 1164, 1166, 1273, 1283, 1284, 1288, 1321, 1331, 1338, 1399, 1427, 1438, 1475, 1480, 1486, 1565, 1566, 1579, 1580, 1585, 1605, 1636, 1638, 1644, 1655, 1668, 1692-1693, 1717, 1726, 1736, 1744, 1749
From Canada ..	542, 594, 602, 685, 743, 843, 1177, 1260, 1272, 1421, 1499, 1641, 1741, 1751, 1766
Dairy Produce ..	307, 1142, 1398, 1521, 1773, 1802, 1811, 1846, 1876, 1886
Dead Meat ..	181-193, 600, 762, 773, 1093, 1357, 1443, 1874, 1895-1899, 1900, 1902, 1906-1915, 1921-1922, 1927-1928, 1930, 1933-1934, 1939-1941, 1946, 1949, 1959, 1961, 1970-1971, 1983-1988, 1994-1998
Desiccated Milk ..	272, 576
Eggs ..	590, 1401, 1402, 1521
Feeding Stuffs ..	357, 817, 885, 1155-1156, 1283, 1322, 1412, 1435, 1703, 1741, 1872
Flax ..	232-234, 727, 1185, 1192
Flour ..	324-326, 758, 761, 1166, 1174, 1177, 1179, 1237, 1300-1309, 1310, 1313, 1314-1318, 1320, 1322, 1324, 1327-1329, 1330, 1332, 1335-1339, 1341-1343, 1346, 1349-1350, 1437, 1475, 1533, 1741, 1744, 1757-1758
From Canada ..	532, 1179, 1260, 1315, 1329, 1335, 1340, 1342, 1356, 1647
U.S.A. ..	799, 801, 1173, 1178, 1296, 1299, 1300, 1303-1309, 1311-1317, 1319, 1320-1321, 1324, 1326, 1330, 1334, 1336-1337, 1340-1346, 1348, 1350, 1475, 1480, 1726, 1741, 1747, 1755
Flowers ..	1364, 1379, 1381, 1515, 1591
Frozen Meat ..	1426, 1832, 1908, 1975-1976
Fruit ..	260, 265-266, 269, 340, 387, 949, 953-955, 957-975, 979-983, 986, 990-992, 994, 1025, 1070, 1075, 1283, 1291, 1383, 1385, 1454, 1513
Fruit Pulp ..	254, 958, 959, 971, 983
Grain ..	573, 584, 602, 926, 1155-1156, 1284, 1290-1291, 1469, 1534, 1742, 1766, 1855, 1868
Hams ..	1104 <i>et seq.</i> , 1142, 1391-1394, 1783-1784
Hay ..	227-228, 889, 921, 931, 1260, 1374-1375, 1402, 1450, 1497, 1614, 1872, 1918
Hops ..	241, 250-251, 389, 1001, 1006-1008, 1011-1013, 1018, 1021, 1027, 1034, 1037, 1039-1041, 1043-1044, 1049, 1054-1055, 1061-1062, 1069, 1077, 1080-1084, 1087, 1090, 1375-1378, 1492, 2011
Lard ..	301, 1116, 1391, 1393, 1409, 1410, 1440, 1523
Live Meat ..	181-192, 287-289, 760, 1094, 1874, 1899, 1904, 1907, 1914-1917, 1920, 1922, 1924, 1934-1939, 1943, 1949, 1958, 1963, 1969, 1971-1972, 1979, 1982-1987, 1994, 1997
Maize ..	178-180, 1298, 1438, 1538, 1734
Malting Barley ..	568, 649, 1291, 1304, 1499, 1674
Margarine ..	315, 919, 1395, 1400, 1403, 1409, 1834

IMPORT OF—*continued.*

Paragraph

Meat ..	76, 161, 181-186, 189, 196, 275-277, 279, 281, 286-287, 355, 389, 598, 758, 762, 771, 799, 802, 809, 881, 983, 1091, 1093, 1098, 1101, 1237, 1386-1387, 1389, 1421, 1450, 1475-1476, 1515, 1782, 1788, 1794, 1801, 1815, 1818, 1819, 1843, 1851, 1853, 1860, 1865, 1887, 1896, 1903, 1913-1918, 1926-1927, 1933, 1938, 1940, 1942, 1951-1954, 1957, 1965, 1976, 1980-1981, 1983, 1989, 1992 <i>et seq.</i>
Milk ..	1396, 1789, 1966
Mutton ..	1007-1008, 1387, 1389, 1879
Oat ..	172-174, 207, 212-213, 526, 564, 803, 1270, 1288, 1295, 1356, 1358, 1668, 1689
Oatmeal ..	592, 1294, 1307, 1350, 1353-1354, 1357, 1359, 1361-1363, 1508
Offals ..	292, 592, 837, 1105, 1174, 1297, 1337-1338, 1525
Oil ..	1368-1370, 1523
Oilcake ..	292, 296, 1346, 1367-1374, 1428, 1430-1431, 1441, 1480
Pork ..	181-186, 193-195, 299, 883, 1102, 1104-1105, 1118, 1123, 1130, 1134, 1138, 1149, 1150, 1393, 1450, 1788
Potatoes ..	388, 543, 550, 655-656, 753, 813, 889, 1364, 1379, 1591
Poultry ..	590, 904, 1402
Seeds ..	1382-1383, 1523
Sheep ..	574, 597, 603, 766, 1097, 1389, 1815
Starch ..	323, 741, 1365-1366, 1442
Store Cattle ..	274, 285-286, 289, 385, 527, 537, 541, 711, 760, 765, 775, 785, 789, 799, 804, 811, 845, 852, 1766, 1794, 1805-1806, 1809, 1825, 1834, 1905, 1912, 1914, 1924, 1941-1950, 1955-1956, 1959, 1961, 1967, 1973, 1987-1989
Straw ..	931, 1270, 1402
Tomatoes ..	949, 963, 995
Wheat ..	24, 25, 31, 32, 52-53, 57-58, 92, 104-105, 115, 163-168, 175-177, 324-325, 355, 602, 926, 1075, 1155-1156, 1273, 1284, 1288, 1321, 1331, 1338, 1469, 1484, 1486, 1534, 1636, 1638, 1644, 1655, 1668, 1692, 1717, 1742, 1766, 1868

IMPORT DUTIES. See *Ad val.*, *Bounty*, *Counter-railing*, *Customs Regulations*, *Drawback*, *Foreign*, *Package Tax*, *Preference*, *Protected Markets*, *Protection*, *Reciprocity*, *Registration*, *Remedial Measures*, *Retaliation*, *Surtax*, *Tea Duty*.

IMPORTS DUTIES SUGGESTED ..	12, 14, 17, 21, 27, 31, 35, 210, 212-213, 217, 250, 295, 305, 364, 393, 519, 621, 644, 753, 817, 843, 849, 855, 865, 871, 881, 882, 892, 901, 910, 913, 928, 935, 947-948, 951, 973, 983, 1012, 1031, 1038, 1044, 1114-1115, 1482, 1484, 1488, 1495, 1532 <i>et seq.</i>
Beneficial ..	210-214, 218, 249, 258, 265-267, 284, 290, 293, 299, 303, 317, 369, 502, 517, 536, 541, 572-573, 578, 617, 661, 704, 765, 789, 821, 823, 842, 848, 871, 881, 887, 892, 913, 934, 996, 1114, 1404, 1485, 1494-1495
If Taxes Reduced ..	517, 531, 573, 602, 607-608, 617, 620, 778, 817, 871, 881, 913, 947, 1164, 1198, 1486
To Farmers ..	512, 693, 765, 778, 823, 887, 935, 1494-1495, 5132, 1550, 1557, 1580, 1582, 1587, 1609, 1702, 1708, 1772, 1774, 1777-1778, 1780-1784, 1794-1795, 1799, 1802, 1815-1816, 1820, 1827, 1830-1831, 1837, 1847, 1857, 1859, 1861, 1875, 1879, 1889, 2003
To Ireland ..	526, 541, 764, 805, 811, 821, 1495, 1538, 1542, 1582, 1681, 1778, 1810, 1826, 1828, 1830, 1862
To Labour ..	517, 526, 541, 579, 617, 689, 720, 765, 773, 793, 805, 808, 811, 823, 842, 848, 878, 910, 923, 942, 951, 1048, 1077, 1425
Cost of Living Not Increased by ..	662, 888, 892, 947
Cost of Production Increased by ..	1496, 1498, 1525, 1629, 1813, 1817, 1853

Paragraph

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED—Cost of Production— <i>continued</i> .	
Reduced by ..	1114, 1167-1168, 1438, 1444,
1482, 1487-1488, 1492, 1499, 1509, 1510-	
1512, 1518-1519, 1522, 1740, 1750,	
	1753, 1755-1756, 1760
Unaffected by ..	1498-1499, 1508, 1513, 1520,
	1602, 1730, 1747, 1753, 1756
Counterbalanced by Reduction of Tea Duty ..	532,
	779, 952, 1529, 1695, 1711
Dumping Stopped by ..	1346, 1355, 1481, 1487,
1490-1492, 1500, 1505, 1508-1509, 1518,	
	1546, 1715, 1749, 1752, 1762
Emigration Discouraged by ..	805, 811, 881, 1485, 1495,
	1581, 1642-1643
Employment Increased by ..	214, 251, 266, 286,
	318, 497, 502, 512, 526, 536, 564-565, 573,
	578, 608, 689, 753, 762, 765, 773, 778,
	805-806, 808, 821, 827, 831, 842-843, 855,
	865, 881, 887, 946, 974, 996, 1019, 1023,
	1026-1028, 1050, 1053, 1058, 1081, 1083,
	1090, 1125, 1138, 1481, 1483, 1488, 1491-
	1493, 1498-1499, 1501, 1508, 1510-1511,
	1573, 1641, 1646, 1655, 1715, 1740, 1750,
	1760, 1789, 1830
Food Prices Not Raised by ..	512, 762, 769, 806,
	802, 1179, 1502, 1504, 1588, 1649, 1668
Foreign Competition Reduced by ..	212-213,
	250-251, 909, 1482, 1491, 1792, 1796, 1888
Foreign Import Duties Reduced by ..	892, 1048,
	1596, 1687, 1690, 1841
Incidence of ..	508, 616, 653, 778, 842, 881, 1114,
	1156, 1483, 1499, 1518, 1577, 1588, 1601,
	1609, 1615, 1619, 1621, 1665, 1716, 1734,
	1795, 1814, 1820, 1823, 1831, 1837, 1841-
	1842, 1852, 1859, 1925
Output Increased by ..	1168, 1492, 1511,
	1559, 1837
Prices Not Raised by ..	213, 317, 382, 497, 602, 842,
	862, 1074, 1114, 1156, 1169, 1509, 1513
Prices Raised by ..	214, 291, 497, 519, 541, 547,
	578, 644, 793, 804, 811, 817, 821, 887,
	1025, 1037, 1164, 1487-1488, 1498-1499,
	1500, 1520
Profits Increased by ..	498, 541, 565,
	608, 904, 1018, 1038, 1535, 1547, 1646,
	1676, 1680, 1688, 1778, 1786, 1791, 1794,
	1806, 1812, 1820, 1892, 1921
Rent Increased by ..	536, 572, 935, 999, 1542,
	1601, 1620, 1628-1629, 1635, 1640, 1646,
	1692, 1698, 1794, 1825, 1848, 1856, 1879,
	1881, 1973
Revenue Increased by ..	616, 1482, 1496, 1500,
	1549, 1563, 1571, 1576, 1578, 1580, 1584,
	1603, 1613, 1625, 1627, 1654, 1687, 1692-
	1693, 1700, 1707, 1726, 1794, 1809
Security Increased by ..	753, 1355, 1487, 1644
Wages Increased by ..	502, 512, 519, 541, 572,
	573, 782, 805, 821, 827, 837, 842, 865,
	881, 1019, 1027, 1031, 1487, 1511, 1620,
	1628, 1752, 1756

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON—

Bacon ..	383, 393, 565, 762, 806, 855, 1111, 1114-1115,
	1123, 1124, 1140, 1148, 1150, 1507, 1516-
	1518, 1520, 1842
Desirable ..	808, 1692, 1103, 1111, 1129,
	1138, 1147, 1149, 1150, 1441, 1491, 1517-
	1518, 1526, 1760-1761, 1810, 1835-1836,
	1842, 1923
Undesirable ..	303, 1143, 1879, 1935
Barley ..	393, 517, 547, 573, 589, 649, 936, 1025,
	1115, 1131, 1138, 1141, 1149, 1492, 1507,
	1588, 1639, 1633
Desirable ..	612, 620, 649, 789, 1101, 1157,
	1198, 1294, 1355, 1483, 1489, 1490, 1505-
	1507, 1525, 1545, 1550, 1558, 1563, 1568,
	1571, 1574, 1580, 1587, 1590, 1606, 1639,
	1643, 1671, 1676, 1713, 1727-1728, 1760,
	1767, 1786

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON BARLEY—continued.		Paragraph
Higher Duty Desired ..	212, 1157, 1482, 1545,	
	1550, 1574, 1663, 1685, 1767	
Undesirable ..	293, 1115, 1148, 1294, 1496-1497,	
	1526, 1589, 1597, 1720, 1764, 1767	
Barley Meal ..	 1482, 1508, 1746	
Beef ..	284, 752, 778-779, 855, 913, 1551, 1593, 1655,	
	1677, 1682, 1774, 1786-1787, 1800, 1820,	
	1852, 1862, 1863, 1879, 1883, 1921, 1946	
Beneficial ..	1659, 1696, 1779, 1782, 1786, 1793,	
	1796, 1799, 1816, 1820, 1821, 1824, 1871,	
	1876, 1879	
Bran ..	 1771	
Brewing Maize ..	547, 817, 861, 942, 1101, 1506, 1547,	
	1568, 1594, 1603, 1611, 1616, 1623, 1638,	
	1650-1651, 1667, 1709, 1712, 1763	
Brine Vegetables ..	 942, 1765	
Butter ..	762, 855, 919, 1114, 1397, 1492, 1518,	
	1520, 1696, 1782, 1786, 1804, 1820, 1841,	
	1872, 1879	
Calves ..	 1861, 1915	
Cattle ..	602, 1776, 1784, 1797, 1852, 1871, 1883,	
	1891, 1902, 1905	
Desirable ..	393, 532, 636, 773, 793, 919, 1091,	
	1098, 1536, 1553, 1677, 1744, 1775-1778,	
	1783-1786, 1793, 1797, 1800-1804, 1811,	
	1823, 1828, 1832, 1872-1873, 1878-1879,	
	1897, 1915, 1925, 1930, 1932-1933, 1936,	
	1940-1941, 1962, 1965-1966, 1973, 1988	
Cheese ..	762, 1397, 1492, 1518, 1520, 1804	
Colonial Produce ..	542, 583, 817, 860, 941, 1172,	
	1648, 1764, 1854, 1861-1865, 1869	
Corn ..	517, 572, 934, 1073, 1508, 1547, 1592, 1594,	
	1599, 1526, 1601, 1610, 1615-1616, 1623,	
	1629, 1632, 1640, 1645, 1654-1655, 1678,	
	1698, 1712, 1722, 1730, 1763, 1866	
Assist Revenue ..	582, 1572, 1576, 1603, 1622,	
	1692, 1700, 1730	
Beneficial ..	498, 517, 526, 578, 594, 616-617, 627,	
	636, 641, 652-653, 669, 693, 769, 789, 793,	
	797, 817, 827, 844, 870-871, 913, 973, 1001,	
	1026, 1063, 1100, 1114, 1180, 1344, 1499,	
	1500, 1504, 1532-1597, 1603-1608, 1613,	
	1617, 1643-1655, 1660, 1666-1669, 1674-	
	1679, 1682-1689, 1692, 1694-1695, 1699,	
	1700-1707, 1711-1713, 1718-1719, 1729,	
	1746, 1760, 1765, 1777, 1779, 1780-1781,	
	1795-1796, 1813, 1831, 1833, 1836, 1841,	
	1850, 1864-1865, 1871, 1878, 1886,	
	1890-1892	
Beneficial to Ireland ..	1532, 1553, 1577, 1681,	
	1696, 1863	
Encourage Cultivation ..	502, 573, 887, 947, 1486,	
	1488, 1500, 1537, 1541, 1544-1545, 1547,	
	1552, 1555, 1557-1560, 1562, 1564, 1570,	
	1573, 1577, 1581, 1583, 1590, 1656, 1672,	
	1694, 1708, 1714	
Higher Duty Desired ..	212, 531, 582, 584, 589,	
	644, 752, 805, 836, 843, 848, 1198, 1531,	
	1542, 1550, 1599, 1603, 1607, 1608, 1621,	
	1624, 1627, 1628, 1638, 1640, 1644-1645,	
	1647, 1653, 1657-1695, 1699, 1706, 1735,	
	1763-1764, 1835, 1842, 1859, 1869, 1870,	
	1873, 1876-1877, 1880-1889, 1891-1892	
Imports Unchecked by ..	620, 1580, 1592, 1622,	
	1655, 1692, 1694	
Increase Employment ..	536, 769, 1536, 1540,	
	1552, 1557, 1690, 1863, 1932	
Increase Wages ..	526, 769, 1489, 1499, 1583, 1597	
Of Little Benefit ..	608, 616-617, 620, 706, 782, 1499,	
	1544-1545, 1548, 1553, 1567, 1573, 1579,	
	1586-1587, 1600, 1607, 1610-1627, 1636,	
	1642, 1646, 1648, 1652, 1654, 1660-1662,	
	1670-1673, 1676, 1682, 1688, 1694-1696,	
	1707, 1710, 1716, 1720, 1729, 1833, 1839,	
	1844, 1864-1865, 1892	

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON CORN—continued.

Of no Benefit ..	910, 919, 1497, 1528, 1583, 1586, 1588, 1597-1598, 1606, 1613, 1619, 1624, 1628-1642, 1644-1645, 1653, 1655-1656, 1659, 1663, 1666, 1668, 1679, 1682, 1684, 1693-1694, 1701-1702, 1710-1712, 1714-1719, 1723-1724, 1727-1729, 1730, 1732, 1733, 1737, 1769, 1770, 1973, 1991
Prices Not Raised by ..	573, 1493, 1548, 1556, 1565, 1568, 1579, 1580, 1582, 1585-1586, 1594, 1598, 1602-1605, 1615, 1625-1627, 1634, 1636, 1641, 1645, 1651, 1656, 1658, 1661, 1668, 1683-1684, 1688, 1695, 1699, 1725, 1748, 1756, 1760, 1762
Prices Raised by ..	503, 536, 578, 589, 811, 817, 1532, 1536, 1539, 1545, 1548, 1551, 1554, 1558-1559, 1561-1562, 1570, 1573, 1578, 1581, 1583, 1585, 1588, 1590-1591, 1593, 1609, 1619, 1620, 1625, 1632, 1642, 1644, 1651, 1675-1676, 1685, 1694, 1713, 1813
Rent Raised by ..	642, 1628
Reduce Taxation	546, 1563, 1571, 1578-1579, 1580, 1584, 1597-1599, 1600-1604, 1625, 1650, 1675, 1709, 1785
Stimulate Milling	1169, 1536, 1540, 1551, 1555, 1561, 1687, 1710, 1756
Cotton Seed ..	871
Undesirable ..	848, 1600, 1643-1644, 1650
Dairy Produce ..	386, 393, 872, 928, 1397, 1491-1492, 1520, 1524, 1724, 1811-1812, 1850, 1855, 1860, 1862, 1871, 1873-1874, 1878, 1880
Beneficial ..	547, 583, 594, 695, 843, 1397, 1521, 1772, 1782-1783, 1790, 1793, 1800, 1802-1804, 1806-1807, 1811, 1814, 1816, 1820, 1822, 1828, 1837, 1843, 1846, 1851, 1860, 1865, 1873, 1876-1878, 1892, 1972, 1999
Prices Raised by	1773, 1783, 1785, 1789, 1799, 1804, 1807, 1821-1822, 1828, 1854, 1858, 1881
Dead Meat ..	1098, 1797, 1801, 1887, 1897, 1898, 1907, 1909, 1913, 1917-1919, 1923, 1935, 1941, 1944, 1948, 1953
Increase Employment ..	1910, 1911, 1913, 1919
Higher than on Live Meat ..	286, 517, 547, 602, 621, 805, 1098-1099, 1894 <i>et seq.</i> , 1909-1911, 1917-1921, 1949
Dextrine ..	1510
Eggs ..	762, 1491, 1521, 1876, 1879
Fat ..	919
Fat Cattle ..	836, 855, 1493, 1519, 1779, 1790, 1792, 1830, 1838, 1861, 1875
Feeding Maize	564, 828, 942, 1115, 1141, 1148-1149, 1548, 1574, 1611, 1617, 1631, 1638, 1650-1651, 1666, 1720
Undesirable	295, 773, 899, 913, 928, 1114-1115, 1157, 1490, 1496, 1525-1526, 1528, 1538, 1549, 1551, 1559, 1562, 1564-1566, 1602, 1613, 1624, 1632, 1672, 1681, 1718, 1783, 1876
Feeding Stuffs	653, 757, 817, 1150, 1322, 1499, 1533, 1540, 1546, 1603, 1618, 1634, 1687, 1724, 1728
Price Raised by ..	773, 1626, 1645, 1660, 1849
Undesirable	653, 936, 1115, 1157, 1491, 1495, 1504, 1526, 1528, 1553, 1626, 1630, 1636, 1649, 1665, 1690, 1719, 1732, 1771
Flax ..	1643, 1696
Flour ..	393, 501, 532, 564, 661, 704, 769, 801, 821, 1025, 1147, 1156, 1180, 1346, 1355, 1482-1483, 1489-1490, 1506, 1518, 1560, 1570, 1609, 1611, 1621, 1639, 1647, 1650, 1668, 1669, 1684, 1691, 1695, 1698-1699, 1700-1702, 1710-1712, 1714, 1716, 1728, 1733, 1740, 1748, 1756, 1759, 1760
Beneficial ..	608, 644, 756-757, 831, 836, 855, 865, 878, 1147, 1306, 1331, 1569, 1574, 1576-1577, 1657, 1663, 1669, 1704, 1706, 1720, 1742-1747, 1750, 1756, 1759, 1878

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON FLOUR—continued.

Colonies should Pay ..	1169, 1723, 1751
Decrease Flour Import ..	762, 1354, 1536, 1549, 1646, 1716
Encourage Home Milling ..	532, 627, 636, 676, 689, 694, 710, 805, 821, 855, 1137, 1154, 1164, 1169, 1174, 1177, 1180, 1183, 1323, 1438, 1489, 1492, 1533, 1542, 1544, 1547-1548, 1551-1553, 1559, 1561, 1573-1575, 1577-1578, 1580, 1584-1586, 1589, 1590, 1606, 1608, 1625, 1630, 1642, 1663, 1666, 1671, 1685, 1696-1698, 1700, 1705, 1714-1715, 1720, 1724-1725, 1729, 1730, 1732, 1739, 1750, 1754, 1757, 1758
Higher Duty Desired ..	572, 773, 1491, 1550, 1606, 1653, 1663, 1678, 1687, 1728, 1730, 1731
Higher than on Corn ..	517, 532, 547, 602, 649, 661, 694, 773, 789, 805, 817, 821, 855, 861, 872, 888, 913, 919, 934, 936, 953, 1073, 1125, 1169, 1174-1175, 1180, 1183, 1328, 1346, 1489, 1501, 1503, 1524, 1540, 1549, 1550, 1581, 1598, 1643, 1651, 1656, 1663-1664, 1666-1668, 1674, 1676, 1681, 1684-1685, 1696-1698, 1700-1709, 1712-1722, 1728-1730, 1731, 1734, 1739, 1740, 1752, 1755-1757
Increase Employment ..	532, 698, 1180, 1292, 1355, 1443-1444, 1552, 1554, 1584, 1597, 1661, 1665, 1671, 1684, 1691, 1701, 1703-1704, 1708-1713, 1717, 1726, 1728, 1738-1739, 1743, 1746-1747, 1750, 1753, 1757
Increase Home Competition ..	1756, 1759
Increase Offal Supply ..	573, 620, 689, 694, 769, 913, 1073, 1125, 1147, 1183, 1355, 1538, 1540, 1553, 1558, 1562, 1564, 1570, 1588, 1602, 1668, 1673, 1675, 1678, 1684, 1689, 1690, 1699, 1703, 1706-1709, 1710, 1716-1718, 1723-1724, 1728-1729, 1730-1731, 1749, 1750
Increase Wheat Cultivation ..	676, 1438, 1745
Increase Wheat Import ..	1154
Prices not Raised by ..	881, 1486, 1608, 1691, 1715, 1737, 1741, 1744, 1746, 1747, 1749, 1753-1755, 1757, 1771
Prices Raised by ..	1180, 1354, 1502, 1526, 1532, 1687, 1708, 1724, 1750, 1753
Prices of Feeding Stuffs Lowered by ..	517, 532, 837, 1579, 1586-1587, 1593, 1616, 1624, 1632, 1646, 1650, 1693, 1711, 1717, 1727, 1731, 1733, 1770
Prices of Offals Lowered by	290, 497, 517, 612, 789, 928, 1131, 1535, 1545-1546, 1550, 1552, 1556-1568, 1573-1574, 1587, 1594, 1644, 1646, 1654, 1662, 1669, 1670, 1688, 1698-1699, 1701, 1710-1711, 1713, 1716-1717, 1719, 1720-1722, 1725-1727
Undesirable ..	1310, 1345, 1524, 1527, 1529, 1530, 1560, 1609, 1626, 1633, 1722, 1736, 1758, 1991
Flowers ..	995, 1515
Foodstuffs ..	519, 689, 709, 952, 1508, 1817, 1818, 1852, 1991
Fruit ..	564, 817, 953, 960, 963-966, 971, 974, 979, 981, 990-991, 1492, 1513-1514
Beneficial ..	953, 960, 968-969, 995, 1513
Imports Stopped by ..	965, 974, 992
Prices Raised by ..	951, 953, 969, 974
Undesirable ..	265, 910, 960, 973, 979
Fruit Pulp ..	959, 960, 964, 971, 991
Grain ..	756, 1328, 1488, 1547, 1564, 1650, 1707, 1766
Prices Not Raised by ..	1491, 1503, 1618, 1721, 1766
Undesirable	1289, 1355, 1488, 1527, 1731, 1757
Hams ..	1114, 1147, 1518, 1520
Hay ..	393, 620, 934, 947, 1491, 1497, 1523, 1530, 1619, 1669, 1695, 1697, 1725, 1728, 1763, 1780, 1872, 1918

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON HAY— <i>continued</i> .		Paragraph
Beneficial ..	999, 1000-1001, 1005-1006, 1018, 1058, 1063, 1977	
To Labour	1002, 1007, 1011, 1018, 1035, 1038, 1058, 1063, 1086, 1572, 1626	
Diminish Import	1001, 1012, 1018, 1027	
Hops ..	389, 393, 583, 1001, 1009, 1027, 1048, 1060, 1086, 1090, 1492-1493, 1593, 1705, 1712, 1763, 1770, 1805, 2005	
40s. per cwt.	1025, 1028, 1031, 1034, 1037, 1044, 1050, 1053, 1058, 1062-1064, 1074, 1077, 1081, 1083, 1090	
Increase Cultivation ..	999, 1001, 1005, 1008, 1011, 1023, 1025, 1027, 1031, 1034, 1035, 1037, 1048, 1053, 1058, 1063, 1077, 1083, 1086, 1572, 1626	
Prices Raised by ..	1005, 1031, 1038, 1048, 1053, 1063	
Undesirable ..	999, 1005-1006, 1044, 1491	
Implements ..	517, 1111, 1140, 1240, 1625, 1645, 1663	
Lard ..	1116, 1124, 1131, 1147, 1423, 1518, 1519, 1524	
Linseed ..	848, 1511-1512, 1625, 1643-1644, 1650, 1771	
Live Meat ..	793, 1894 <i>et seq.</i>	
Higher than on Dead ..	288, 1879, 1898, 1920	
<i>et seq.</i> , 1943, 1946, 1950 <i>et seq.</i> , 1961-1964, 1968-1969, 1992, 1997		
Locust Beans ..	1600	
Machinery ..	1058, 1157, 1490, 1503, 1659	
Price Raised by ..	689, 935, 1612-1613, 1620-1621, 1625, 1666, 1803, 1835, 1857	
Maize, Desirable ..	382, 393, 503, 507, 547, 612, 617, 620, 861, 1025, 1074, 1111, 1148, 1489, 1491, 1563, 1568, 1572, 1589, 1599, 1616, 1636, 1645, 1662, 1678, 1689, 1691, 1724, 1734, 1760, 1762, 1765, 1766	
Undesirable ..	572-573, 649, 773, 789, 871, 899, 910, 928, 1092, 1114-1115, 1123, 1138, 1198, 1490, 1497, 1525-1526, 1528, 1549, 1551, 1558-1559, 1562, 1564, 1581, 1590, 1594, 1602, 1621, 1650, 1656, 1675, 1681, 1688, 1695, 1701, 1711, 1718, 1722, 1770, 1771, 1783	
Maize Meal ..	913, 1129, 1355, 1746	
Malting Barley, Desirable ..	573, 612, 888, 1148, 1157, 1306, 1490-1491, 1504, 1506, 1525, 1567, 1569, 1580, 1606, 1639, 1671, 1676, 1701, 1707, 1716, 1721, 1743	
Undesirable ..	547, 1525, 1639, 1767	
Manufactured Stuffs, Desirable ..	719, 821, 855, 887, 910, 919, 928, 952, 1130, 1348, 1483, 1490, 1493, 1495-1497, 1499, 1500, 1502, 1505, 1508, 1510, 1514, 1597, 1608, 1628, 1655, 1695, 1697, 1712, 1719, 1730-1732, 1756, 1759, 1737, 1747, 1762, 1765, 1771, 1794, 1833, 1835, 1863	
Undesirable ..	1508, 1527, 1550, 1587, 1613, 1641, 1816-1817	
Manures, Undesirable ..	1495, 1504, 1612, 1613, 1618, 1669, 1850	
Margarine ..	1404, 1520-1524, 1834, 1835	
Meal ..	1506, 1651, 1697, 1701, 1703, 1756, 1760	
Meat ..	393, 694, 752, 793, 797, 817, 855, 872, 1091, 1098, 1450, 1493, 1521, 1553, 1808, 1821, 1843, 1847, 1850, 1860, 1865, 1871, 1873-1874, 1887, 1890, 1892, 1935, 1988	
Beneficial ..	383, 385, 547, 583, 594, 608, 773, 782, 1073, 1092, 1491, 1785, 1792, 1796-1797, 1799, 1800, 1808-1809, 1810, 1816, 1820, 1829, 1832, 1837, 1843, 1846, 1852, 1880, 1893, 1973	
Beneficial if Taxes Reduced ..	1814, 1837-1842, 1861, 1863	
Beneficial to Farmers ..	865, 1198, 1516, 1775, 1782-1787, 1791-1792, 1794, 1799, 1805, 1807-1808, 1811-1812, 1814, 1818, 1821-1822, 1831, 1845-1847, 1860, 1863, 1876, 1886, 1889	

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON MEAT— <i>continued</i> .		Paragraph
Beneficial to Ireland ..	594, 752, 1198, 1696, 1892	
Equal on Live and Dead ..	817, 872, 1355, 1544, 1799, 1821, 1879, 1888, 1926, 1927, 1958, 1967 <i>et seq.</i>	
Higher Duty Desired ..	817, 1864, 1869-1893	
Of Little Benefit	583, 1774, 1820-1821, 1824, 1843-1847, 1850-1851, 1853, 1857, 1860, 1887, 1988	
Prices not Raised by ..	843, 1092, 1100, 1198, 1788, 1809, 1810, 1814, 1831, 1845, 1848-1849, 1851, 1873, 1880, 1889, 1890, 1983, 1998	
Prices Raised by ..	644, 694, 1773, 1783-1784, 1788, 1797-1798, 1800, 1805, 1810-1811, 1813, 1815, 1822-1823, 1829, 1845, 1850-1851, 1853, 1858, 1862, 1882, 1995, 1999	
Undesirable ..	284, 801, 1812, 1847-1848, 1851, 1856-1857, 1860, 1888, 1941, 1973-1974, 1991	
Mutton ..	1551, 1593, 1682, 1782, 1786, 1790, 1816, 1820, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1862, 1871, 1883, 1946	
Beneficial to Farmers ..	565, 1774, 1777, 1782, 1786, 1799, 1820, 1874	
Oats ..	212, 1025, 1483, 1489, 1589, 1633, 1643, 1701, 1712	
Desirable ..	393, 594, 627, 1506, 1538, 1543, 1554, 1566, 1568, 1574, 1583, 1587, 1617, 1685, 1689, 1708, 1711, 1717, 1718, 1725	
Oatmeal ..	594, 1355, 1361, 1489, 1505, 1508-1509, 1695, 1702, 1711, 1728, 1739, 1746	
Offals, Desirable ..	689, 1347, 1493, 1525, 1573, 1679, 1701-1702, 1746-1747, 1750	
Undesirable ..	789, 1609, 1701, 1722, 1757	
Oil ..	936, 1420, 1511, 1523	
Oilcake, Desirable ..	653, 1034, 1371, 1420, 1431, 1511-1512, 1552, 1692, 1701, 1728, 1850, 2001	
Undesirable ..	789, 1370, 1430, 1600, 1602, 1618, 1628, 1634, 1637, 1649, 1666-1667, 1672, 1770-1771, 1783, 1808, 1846-1847, 1850, 1876	
Peas ..	1489, 2003	
Peat Moss ..	1918	
Pork ..	383, 541, 1130, 1138, 1150, 1889	
Bacon Import Increased by ..	299, 1143, 1149	
Beneficial ..	541, 1114, 1123, 1129, 1130, 1143, 1491, 1782, 1792, 1862, 1871, 1883, 1946	
Potatoes	217, 621, 753, 817, 1025, 1492, 1514, 1591, 1619, 1658, 1678, 1695, 1704, 1765, 1795, 1872	
Poultry ..	904, 1491	
Raw Material ..	583, 821, 1703, 1833	
Undesirable	532, 719, 910, 1130, 1483, 1490, 1496, 1498, 1510, 1513, 1527-1528, 1597, 1702, 1707, 1730, 1737, 1740, 1747, 1759, 1762, 1832, 1834	
Roots ..	1491	
Rolled Oats ..	1508	
Sheep ..	1493, 1878, 1915	
Beneficial ..	1782, 1784, 1797-1799, 1828, 1833	
Undesirable ..	1775, 1844, 1871	
Starch ..	1509, 1511	
Store Cattle ..	1776, 1786, 1788, 1799, 1822, 1830, 1845, 1941, 1950, 1979, 1990	
Beneficial ..	1786-1788, 1799, 1807, 1810, 1822, 1950	
Higher than on Dead Meat ..	1919, 1920, 1963	
Lower than on Dead Meat	1903, 1905, 1914, 1949	
Undesirable ..	1539, 1805-1806, 1851, 1946, 1989, 1990	
Sugar ..	561-562	
Straw ..	393, 620, 934-953, 1533, 1619, 1669, 1695, 1725, 1872, 1918	
Swine ..	1915	
Vegetables ..	564, 953, 991, 1489, 1514, 1587, 1695	

IMPORT DUTIES SUGGESTED ON—continued.

Paragraph

Wheat ..	351, 376, 381, 393, 526, 594, 617, 661, 762, 1147, 1156, 1483, 1489, 1491, 1498, 1503-1504, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1550, 1578, 1642, 1718, 1720, 1751, 1866	
Beneficial ..	376, 501, 526, 541, 564, 594, 608, 612, 762, 765, 820, 1137, 1164, 1492, 1501, 1503, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1651, 1653, 1691, 1700, 1721-1722, 1728, 1743-1744, 1746, 1750	
Beneficial if Bounty Granted ..	704, 1499, 1600, 1606 <i>et seq.</i>	
Beneficial if Taxes Reduced ..	1597 <i>et seq.</i>	
Higher Duty Desired ..	572, 773, 928, 933, 1025, 1344, 1497, 1498, 1502-1504, 1643, 1645-1646, 1658-1695, 1701, 1708, 1734	
Import not Restricted by ..	602, 844, 1499, 1565-1566, 1574	
Increase Employment ..	526, 762, 1566, 1571	
Lower Duty Desired ..	936, 1483, 1489, 1497-1498, 1708	
Of little Benefit ..	617, 1490, 1497, 1554, 1576, 1588, 1614-1627, 1706, 1724-1725, 1729, 1732, 1768, 1805	
Of no Benefit ..	693, 983, 1346, 1528, 1628-1642, 1671, 1707, 1714, 1756	
Price not Raised by ..	564, 661, 689, 843, 881, 1100, 1147, 1198, 1563, 1609, 1611, 1641, 1693, 1704, 1707, 1715, 1727, 1741, 1752	
Price Raised by ..	573, 1498, 1501, 1542, 1573, 1670, 1752, 1756	
Undesirable ..	35, 793, 910, 1503, 1606, 1617, 1711, 1718-1719, 1722, 1728, 1757, 1759, 1766	
Wheatmeal ..	1746	
Wood Pulp ..	1918	
Wool ..	583, 805, 1801	
IMPROVED METHODS ..	48, 58, 313-314, 320, 509, 1017, 1035, 1892	

INCLOSURE ACTS—See *Acts of*—

INCOME TAX ..	1080, 1842, 1856, 1887	
INDIA ..	296, 1751	
Export from ..	1425-1426, 1510, 1868	
Import from ..	1174, 1262, 1372-1373	
Preference to ..	594, 1502-1503, 1510, 1741, 1751	

INDIAN CORN—See also *Maize* ..

INDIAN CORN STARCH ..	1280	
INDIAN MEAL ..	761, 830, 881, 905, 907, 1123, 1138, 1497, 1702, 1746	

INDIAN WHEAT ..	627	
IN-FED CATTLE ..	528, 1780	
INQUIRY FORMS ..	1205-1219	
INSECT PEST ..	907-908, 956, 975, 1030, 1082	

INSPECTION See also *Agricultural Inspectors, Factory—, Government—, Meat—* ..

INSTRUCTOR ..	511, 525, 756, 898	
INSURANCE ..	734, 947, 1912	
INTEMPERANCE ..	786, 791	
INTENSIVE CULTIVATION ..	551	

INTEREST ON CAPITAL ..	713, 722, 944, 1054, 1746, 1815	
INTERMITTENT LABOUR ..	976	
INTERMITTENT RUNNING ..	1314	

IPSWICH ..	1151-1154, 1458	
IRELAND ..	20, 25-27, 144, 217, 223, 252, 275, 282, 299, 333, 509, 732, 759, 904, 1121, 1136, 1686, 1697, 1848, 1872, 1882, 1976	

Bacon Production ..	297, 303, 305, 522, 808, 809, 810, 829, 1113, 1119-1124, 1132-1135, 1138-1139, 1304, 1394, 1836	
Barley Growing ..	128-130, 585, 807, 1119, 1124, 1198, 1590	

Butter Production ..	540, 591, 721, 734, 764, 894, 896, 1247, 1401, 1782, 1851	
Canals ..	1137	
Climate ..	525, 529, 594, 1573, 1659	

Co-operation ..	539, 708, 725, 728, 788, 1251-1253	
Corn Growing ..	223, 596, 739, 740, 1198, 1545, 1594, 1651, 1665	

IRELAND, Corn Growing—continued.

Paragraph

Proposed Duty Desirable ..	762, 1532-1533, 1535, 1553, 1577, 1592, 1681, 1696, 1862, 1863	
Undesirable ..	1633, 1655, 1685, 1733	
Cottage Accommodation ..	345, 347-348, 350-351, 511, 588, 631, 764, 777, 791, 800, 810, 819, 830, 852, 854, 897, 907, 1197	
Creameries ..	591, 721-722, 734, 788, 854, 898, 1133-1134, 1247, 1252, 1888	
Credit Banks ..	722, 733	
Dairying ..	275, 309, 310, 312, 314, 319, 329-331, 591, 723, 734, 764, 774, 804, 890, 895, 897, 1133-1134, 1401, 1806, 1810, 1816, 1828, 1831, 1872, 1889, 1962	
Decline of Agriculture ..	126-128, 200, 204, 206, 224, 597, 740, 749, 786, 889, 1125	
Emigration from ..	538, 591, 596, 707, 749, 764, 786, 800, 897, 1581, 1643, 1681, 1888	
Employment ..	503, 591, 596, 1536	
Farming ..	509, 527, 589, 590, 591, 600, 729, 731, 737, 810-811, 889, 1197, 1235, 1339, 1582, 1592, 1665, 1782, 1879, 1927	
Flax Production ..	538, 727, 1124, 1185 <i>et seq.</i> , 1235, 1696	
Freight Rates ..	539, 593, 854, 1107, 1137, 1461, 1614	
Fruit-Growing ..	760, 910	
Hay Production ..	785, 890	
Horse Breeding ..	523, 591, 748, 771, 784	
Hours of Labour ..	791, 800	
Labour Cost ..	764, 785, 829, 1121, 1135	
Labour Efficiency ..	760, 791, 829	
Labour Scarcity ..	314, 524, 1235, 1660, 1685	
Labour Supply ..	264, 587, 760, 776, 802, 1121	
Lard Industry ..	1124, 1147	
Local Rates ..	512, 525, 540, 626, 631, 708, 751, 756, 764, 772, 775, 778, 792, 805, 811, 820, 831, 848, 854, 899, 907-908, 1137, 1598, 1643-1644	
Maize used as Food ..	761, 772, 871, 1105, 1123	
Manuring ..	805, 1235	
Meat Trade ..	755, 757, 809, 822, 1118, 1134-1135, 1198, 1879, 1897, 1915, 1922, 1972	
Benefited by Proposed Duty ..	594, 1198, 1544, 1794, 1802, 1811, 1829, 1873, 1889, 1923, 1984	
Milling ..	541, 591-592, 761, 805, 1173-1175, 1330, 1533, 1590, 1633, 1642, 1655, 1726	
Mills Closed ..	541, 1137, 1173, 1176, 1533, 1534	
Oat Cultivation ..	128-130, 203-204, 208, 522, 526, 538, 591, 594, 1614	
Oatmeal Manufacturing ..	532, 592, 1358	
Pig Grazing ..	724, 759, 772, 776, 899, 1119, 1133, 1134, 1137-1138, 1394, 1836, 1889	
Potato-Growing ..	37, 137, 215, 597, 753, 1364, 1633, 1658, 2001	
Prices ..	251, 305-306, 709, 751, 753, 758, 785, 803, 896, 898, 1116, 1119, 1120, 1135, 1196, 1193, 1553, 1810, 1947, 1976	
Railway Rates ..	216, 283, 303, 530, 708, 761, 772, 788, 793, 804-805, 810, 890, 1136, 1447-1449, 1450, 1454, 1461	
Rent ..	539, 703, 791, 853, 1494, 1692, 1825, 1879	
Small Holdings ..	761, 1110	
Starch Production ..	741, 1365	
Technical Education ..	511, 525, 530, 539, 540, 600, 751, 761, 772, 830, 852, 854, 1121, 1451	
Tillage Farming ..	591, 759, 784, 805, 809, 811, 1573, 1660, 1686, 1874	
Tobacco-Growing ..	238, 1195-1198, 2033-2034	
Transport Facilities ..	590, 593, 792, 793, 1874	
Wages ..	342, 529, 588, 760, 764, 791, 800, 823, 1330	
Water Power ..	1137, 1559	
IRISH AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY ..	305-306, 310, 318, 328-331, 333, 720, 732, 894, 898, 1193, 1244	
IRISH CATTLE ..	540, 735, 761, 771, 793, 908, 1778, 1874, 1922, 1938, 1966	
Breeding ..	540, 737, 771, 804, 1966	

	Paragraph
IRISH CATTLE—continued.	
Fattening	752, 1872
Feeding	298-299, 312, 597, 748, 791, 804, 1235, 1891
Grazing	758, 804, 1195, 1235, 1386, 1824, 1933, 1971
Rearing	758, 1924, 1926, 1938, 1941, 1984
Slaughtering	1134, 1998
Export	522, 798, 1922, 1938
Freight Rates	761, 820, 1447, 1452
Industry Benefited by Proposed Duty	532, 752, 1677, 1791, 1823, 1828, 1879
Injured by Imports	527, 587, 760, 765, 775, 804, 811, 1806, 1816, 1922-1924, 1942, 1944, 1967
IRISH INDUSTRIES	538, 591, 909
Benefited by Proposed Duty	526, 541, 752, 764, 805, 811, 820, 821, 1494-1495, 1538, 1582, 1655, 1680, 1681, 1686, 1778, 1826, 1828, 1830
Injured by Free Trade	303, 589, 595, 1494, 1809, 1844, 1853
IRISH LAND ACTS	509, 529, 623-624, 847
ITALY	91-96, 313, 346, 904, 1263, 1400, 1415, 1433, 1462-1464

JAM —See also <i>Strawberry</i> —	254, 266, 269, 954, 958, 976
JAM MAKING	956, 960, 975, 1229
JAMAICA	966, 1266
JAPAN	846, 1166-1167, 1265
JAVA	1266
JERSEY	813
JOBBERS	852
JUTE	1058

KARTELLS	1168
KENT	220, 251, 336, 983-984, 997-1000, 1003-1008, 1021-1060, 1087-1088
Education	1034, 1036, 1050
Hop Industry	240-242, 997-1000, 1003-1008, 1021-1060, 1087-1088
Labour Quality	833, 1003, 1033, 1047, 1087
Labour Scarcity	1007, 1033, 1087
Labour Supply	997, 1033, 1049, 1052, 1087
Local Rates	983, 993, 1025, 1027, 1030, 1034, 1047, 1052, 1056, 1088
Mills Closed	1314
Wages	343, 945, 1033, 1036, 1038, 1049
KERRY	284, 311, 343, 737, 763-764, 803-805, 1582, 1893
KILCORNAN	1791
KILDARE	281, 719, 1237, 1686, 1709, 1891
KILKENNY	252, 290, 783-789, 1245, 1251, 1545, 1557, 1637, 1681
KILMABNOCK	307, 312, 920-923
KINCARDINE	1250
KINGSTON-ON-SOAR	768, 927
KNIFEMEN	1135

LABOUR—See also *Apprenticeship, Artisans, Binmen, Blacksmiths, Boy—, Carpenters, Carters, Casual—, Child—, Dairying—, Emigration, Employment, Farm—, Female—, Foremen, Gardeners, Hand—, Horsekeepers, Hours of—, Intermittent—, Knifemen, Labourer, Occasional—, Ploughmen, Pole-pullers, Shepherds, Skilled—, Slaughtermen, Summer—, Sunday work, Town—, Trades Union, Unemployment, Wages, Waggoner, Winter—, Working-classes.*

149-156, 221, 338-344, 552, 563, 604, 611, 655, 657, 683-684, 712, 749, 754, 784, 915, 938, 945, 982, 986-987, 991-992, 1006, 1009, 1018, 1031, 1034, 1056, 1164, 1182, 1186, 1188, 1201, 1228-1229, 1505, 1530, 1597, 1625, 1670, 1693, 1781

	Paragraph
LABOUR—continued.	
Abroad	234, 572, 831, 942, 993, 996, 1025, 1135, 1188, 1320, 1335, 1371-1372, 1383, 1425, 1779
In Colonies	634, 697, 755, 764, 768, 1854
Germany	1364, 1382, 1696
Holland	939, 1293
U.S.A.	744, 823, 1110, 1201, 1409, 1419
Affected by Arable Converted to Pasture	509, 691, 709, 795, 861, 896, 911, 931, 1195, 1226, 1228, 1485
Affected by Proposed Duties	532, 636, 676, 709, 769, 782, 793, 805, 808, 811, 827, 842, 865, 892, 948, 951, 969, 1001, 1012, 1048, 1063, 1157, 1425, 1438, 1491, 1500, 1502, 1510-1511, 1518, 1521-1522, 1536, 1539, 1542-1543, 1548-1549, 1566, 1571-1572, 1583, 1591, 1671, 1690, 1711, 1756, 1780, 1803, 1835
Attracted to other Industries	205, 339, 345, 499, 534, 588, 651, 749, 780, 795, 833, 880, 921, 931, 968, 1003, 1007, 1030, 1152, 1183, 1231
To Railways	515, 545, 588, 903, 912, 926, 987, 1071
Migration to Towns	495, 510, 534, 538-539, 545, 592, 607, 624-625, 639, 651, 657, 673, 689, 700, 767, 775, 780-783, 814, 825, 833, 839, 859, 883, 890, 903, 915, 921, 926, 958, 987, 1007, 1010, 1033, 1036, 1125, 1144, 1152, 1183, 1231, 1445, 1505, 1637, 1685
LABOUR COST	206, 207, 221, 234, 253, 269, 287, 308, 500, 694, 700, 939, 944, 951, 1033, 1225, 1496, 1541
In Buckinghamshire	494-495, 783
Cambridgeshire	544-545
Gloucestershire	838, 1226, 1227
Ireland	528-529, 532, 629, 763, 785-786, 788, 798, 803, 830, 850, 893, 895, 897, 907, 1121, 1192, 1196, 1235, 1237, 1239, 1561, 1594, 1633
Lincolnshire	551, 560, 563, 566, 815
Oxfordshire	930, 931
Scotland	508, 921, 976, 1233
Somerset	614, 1230
Suffolk	568, 569, 1223
Sussex	1014, 1020, 1593
Wales	1231, 1232, 1640, 1782
Worcestershire	1071, 1090
LABOUR COST PER ACRE —See paragraphs <i>Annual Outgoings.</i>	
LABOUR DIFFICULTIES	264, 605, 1001, 1185-1186, 1188, 1594, 1686, 1693
LABOUR EFFICIENCY	206, 311, 341, 508, 528, 604, 639, 664-665, 776, 868, 950, 976, 993, 997, 1119, 1128, 1144, 1445
Deteriorated	370, 514, 534, 538, 545, 569, 576, 580-581, 604, 619, 651, 673, 705, 767, 781, 795, 814, 825, 829, 857, 868, 883, 912, 915, 926, 939, 945, 968, 1027, 1070, 1085, 1152, 1162, 1224, 1445
In Ireland	528, 760, 764, 786, 788, 791, 799, 829, 830, 851, 880, 916, 1196, 1239, 1253, 1660
Kent	833, 983, 1003, 1033, 1047, 1087
Scotland	600
Sussex	996, 1001, 1020, 1076
LABOUR SCARCITY —	
In England	205, 207, 225, 339, 342, 346, 495, 545, 604, 607, 609, 780, 814, 824, 833, 839, 857, 868, 876, 912, 981, 1007, 1010, 1071, 1076, 1079, 1221, 1222, 1224, 1226-1229, 1682
Ireland	206, 233, 234, 314, 524, 538, 595, 625, 630, 633-634, 708, 719, 749, 775, 786, 798-799, 804, 810, 850, 853, 880, 896, 907, 916, 1030, 1188, 1235, 1237, 1555, 1676
Scotland	600, 683, 921
Wales	1231-1232, 1292

	Paragraph
LABOUR SUPPLY .. 340, 370, 499, 534, 614, 619, 638, 657, 700, 767, 843-844, 868, 902, 926, 945, 987, 1012, 1061, 1082, 1085, 1682	
In Bedfordshire 1162, 1174, 1222	
Bucks 780, 824, 825	
Cumberland 604, 605, 607	
Gloucestershire 838, 839, 987, 1226-1229	
Ireland 587, 749, 756, 775, 800, 804, 807, 854, 897	
Kent 997, 1007, 1022, 1024, 1027, 1029, 1033, 1046, 1049, 1052, 1056, 1087	
Lincolnshire 552, 814-815, 857, 860, 863	
Scotland 833	
Suffolk 883, 1020, 1152	
Sussex 876, 1014, 1076, 1079	
Worcestershire 958, 1010, 1070-1071, 1089	
LABOUR-SAVING MACHINERY 509, 528, 807, 841, 987, 1121, 1165, 1176, 1222, 1235, 1361	
LABOURER .. 265, 338-351, 588, 711, 781-782, 786, 839, 881, 902-3, 916, 926, 1106, 1188, 1557, 1877	
Proposed Duties Beneficial 498, 517, 526, 541, 617, 710, 720, 765, 773, 823, 843, 848-849, 910, 923, 942, 999, 1007, 1018, 1077, 1086, 1500, 1514, 1532, 1620, 1795, 1889	
LABOURERS' ACT (IRELAND) 807, 881	
LABOURERS' FOOD.. 497, 528, 830, 849, 881, 902, 907, 1842	
LAMB 147, 191-193, 884, 1163, 1644, 1802	
LAMPETER 714	
LANCASHIRE 1199, 1231	
LAND—See also <i>Alluvial—, Arable—, Bog—, Cheese—, Clay—, Derelict—, Down—, Farm—, Fen—, Free—, Grass—, Grazing—, Heath—, Loam—, Marsh—, Meadow—, Mountain—, Pasture—, Plough—, Soil, Strong—, Swampy—, Waste—, Warped—, Wheat—</i> 622, 803, 847, 1086	
Cultivation 519, 526, 569, 623, 810, 1050, 1077, 1110, 1283, 1516, 1745	
Deterioration 845, 1167	
Drainage 622	
Fertility 527, 548-549, 551, 598, 601-602, 665, 764, 799, 1223, 1785	
Rent 998, 1128, 1146-1147, 1182-1183, 1198	
Tax 1109, 1163, 1486, 1548	
Tenure 973, 1197, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
Tithe 1490	
Transfer 600, 730, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
Value 506, 549, 571, 839, 1073, 1151, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
LAND ACTS (IRELAND) 329, 847, 893, 1538, 2043	
LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND) 853, 1879	
LAND LEASE 847, 1000	
LAND PURCHASE 329, 352, 509, 523, 529, 731, 1844, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
LANDLORDS 730, 781, 837, 940, 956, 997, 1182	
Agric. Rates Act Beneficial to 703, 904	
Cottage Building by 692, 712, 912, 921, 922, 935, 998	
Duties Proposed Beneficial to 999, 1621, 1627, 1849, 1879, 1881	
LANDOWNERS 268, 370, 520, 913, 1496, 1502, 1557, 1803, 1974, 2035	
LANGDON, KENT 1045-1046	
LARD—See also <i>Raw—, Refined—</i> 301, 1105, 1117, 1124, 1136, 1410, 1423, 1436, 1523	
Dumping at Home 1147, 1390, 1392-1393, 1410	
Foreign Competition at Home 301, 1113, 1136, 1415, 1440	
Import 161, 301, 1116, 1391, 1393, 1410, 1523	
Import Duty Suggested 1116, 1124, 1131, 1147, 1423, 1517-1519	
Prices 1116, 1136, 1473, 1477	
LARD COMPOUNDS 1523-1524	
LARD REFINERIES 301, 1415	
LARD SUBSTITUTES 302, 1523	
LAVENHAM, SUFFOLK 1201	
LEAN CATTLE 855, 1829, 1982	
LEATHER 1520, 1781, 1904, 1911, 1917	
LEDBURY 269, 956	

	Paragraph
LEEDS 255, 902	
LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS 1407-1409	
LEICESTERSHIRE 220, 273, 276-277, 283-284, 307, 336, 343, 498-503, 611, 765-770, 794-797, 1644, 1867	
LEICESTERSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE 283, 295, 307, 309, 498, 766, 794	
LEINSTER 201, 625, 1185	
LEITH 263, 323, 977, 1184, 1286, 1467	
LEMON 965-966	
LENTIL 1586	
LEOMINSTER 1677	
LIMAVADY, DERRY 1252	
LIME 830, 890	
LIMERICK 282, 305, 343, 774, 893-899, 1137, 1461, 1553, 1594, 1633, 1680	
LINCOLNSHIRE 199, 201, 214, 215, 219, 251, 256, 257, 276-277, 280, 371, 548-567, 647-650, 812- 817, 856-866, 1148, 1249, 1283, 1296, 1344	
Co-operation 332, 1244-1245, 1249	
Cottage Accommodation 553, 814-815, 860, 863	
Education 553-554, 815	
Labour Cost 551, 560, 563, 566, 815	
Labour Scarcity 552, 814-815, 857, 860, 863	
Local Rates 554, 815-816, 860	
Market Organisation 816	
Mills Closed 865	
Railway Rates 216, 556, 1449	
LINCOLNSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE 812	
LINEN 1192	
LINSEED 228, 292, 828, 1148, 1284, 1431	
Import Duty Suggested 1503, 1512	
Undesirable 849, 1531, 1549, 1558, 1562, 1600, 1602, 1625, 1643-1644, 1650, 1672, 1701, 1771	
LINSEED MEAL 759, 895	
LINSEED OIL 1367 <i>et seq.</i> , 1423	
Export 1418, 1432-1433, 1436, 2006, 2008	
Foreign Import Duties 1420, 1423, 1431-1433, 2001, 2006	
Import Duty Suggested 936, 1511	
LINSEED OIL CAKE 1367, 1737, 1847, 1868, 1872	
Import 1367, 1369, 1370, 1374, 1441	
Import Duty Suggested 936, 1511, 1637, 1701	
Prices 1367, 1441, 1511	
LISTOWEL 1893	
LITTLEBOURNE, KENT 1049	
LIVE CATTLE—See also <i>Cattle</i> 1900, 1953	
Freight Rates.. .. . 1902, 1912-1913, 1945	
Import 1095, 1391, 1827, 1900, 1921, 1932, 1976, 1983, 1999	
Desirable 1093, 1810, 1897, 1915, 1919, 1934, 1946-1947, 1985	
Undesirable 547, 650, 1802, 1918, 1922-1923, 1935, 1938, 1940, 1945, 1951, 1955, 1959, 1960, 1962-1964, 1966-1967, 1986, 1989	
Import Duty Suggested 805, 1098, 1891, 1902- 1906, 1921, 1925, 1930-1936, 1940-1941, 1961-1965, 1988	
LIVE MEAT 760, 1095, 1450	
Colonial Preference 1857 <i>et seq.</i>	
Import 181-192, 287-289, 1094, 1907, 1917, 1920, 1939, 1985, 1997	
Danger of Infectious Disease 1951 <i>et seq.</i>	
Imported sold as British 1996 <i>et seq.</i>	
Proposed Duty 756-757, 1099, 1355, 1772 <i>et seq.</i> , 1894 <i>et seq.</i>	
Beneficial.. .. . 1772 <i>et seq.</i>	
If Taxes Reduced.. .. . 1837 <i>et seq.</i>	
Higher Duty Desirable 1869 <i>et seq.</i>	
Higher on Dead Meat.. .. . 1894 <i>et seq.</i>	
Lower on Dead Meat 517, 547, 1098, 1920 <i>et seq.</i>	
No Distinction 817, 872, 1491, 1967 <i>et seq.</i>	
Of Little Benefit 1843 <i>et seq.</i>	
Of no Benefit 1847 <i>et seq.</i>	

LIVESTOCK—See also <i>Stock</i> and Specified kind ..	Paragraph 110-112.
141, 145, 511, 605, 685, 731, 734, 1227,	
1632, 1634, 1714, 1813, 1941	
Import Desirable	598, 1774
Undesirable .. 1816, 1858, 1908, 1941, 1943, 1949	
Import Duty Suggested	1879, 1883, 1920,
	1936, 1963
Port Slaughtering	928, 1917, 1955
LIVERPOOL .. 263, 279, 323, 525, 711, 748-749, 909, 917,	
977, 1100, 1120, 1170, 1346, 1405, 1415,	
1446-1447, 1459, 1463-1464, 1466, 1468,	
	1475, 1897
LLANDYSSIL	1794
LOAM LAND	1227
LOANS—See also <i>Government</i> —	512, 624
LOCAL AUTHORITIES—See also <i>County Council, District</i>	
<i>Council</i>	772, 777, 840, 860
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (IRELAND) ..	525, 751, 854, 899
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD	348, 886, 1102
LOCAL RATES .. 260, 264, 315, 335-338, 349, 361, 367, 390	
Abroad	1353, 1356
In England	498, 516, 646, 649, 815, 858, 864,
	886, 946, 952, 959, 969, 1047, 1152, 1341,
	1459, 1502, 1689, 1815
Ireland .. 525, 775, 778, 792, 831, 848, 854, 899,	
	907, 1137
Scotland	601, 836
Effect of Agric. Rates Act on .. 368-369, 500, 616, 631,	
	703, 706, 840, 860, 904, 913, 1027, 1052,
	1153, 1183
Incidence	497, 588, 615, 854
Increased .. 257, 356, 496-497, 500, 535-536, 546,	
	554, 571, 577, 607, 616, 620, 652, 659, 674,
	693, 697, 706, 769, 796, 826, 904, 911, 913,
	932, 940, 944, 950, 968, 973, 990, 996, 1083,
	1086, 1110, 1162, 1183, 1827
In Ireland .. 512, 525, 540, 626, 631, 768,	
	751, 756, 764, 772, 805, 811, 820, 831,
	907-908, 1137, 1598, 1643-1644
Kent .. 983, 993, 998, 1022, 1025, 1027, 1030,	
	1034, 1047, 1052, 1056, 1088
Lincolnshire	815, 860, 864
Scotland	601, 922, 1651
Sussex .. 877, 1001, 1017, 1076, 1080, 1750	
Wales	1086, 1229, 1782
Worcestershire	1010, 1065, 1073, 1090
Increased by Education Act .. 368, 519, 536, 577, 607,	
	697, 860, 887, 1050
Proposed Duties should Relieve .. 517, 531, 608, 617,	
	620, 913, 953, 1001, 1544, 1598, 1600-1601,
	1603-1604, 1625, 1668, 1675, 1682, 1690,
	1764, 1806, 1814
Reduced	531, 606, 635, 640, 899
LOCAL RATES PER ACRE—See paragraphs <i>Annual Outgoings</i> .	
LOCUST BEAN	1563, 1600, 1876
LONDON	257-258, 313, 350, 1116, 1132, 1381,
	1439, 1442
Dock Facilities	1470
Freight Rates to .. 284, 539, 615, 672, 933, 935,	
	977, 1072, 1079, 1100, 1106-1107, 1109,
	1389, 1446, 1454, 1456, 1459, 1462-1466,
	1469, 1471, 1827, 1864
Labour	711, 833, 843, 962
Mills Closed	1511
LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	293
LONDON MARKETS—See also <i>Covent Garden, Smithfield</i> 252,	
	262, 333, 1102, 1467-1468, 1779
LONDON PRICES	281, 297, 1093, 1325, 1475
LONDONDERRY .. 282, 331, 332, 1239, 1251, 1448, 1454,	
	1561, 1614, 1708, 1871, 1886
LONGFORD	343, 809-811
LUCERNE	209, 1223-1224
LUTON	1446
LYNN	1467

MACHINE-PRESSED HAY AND STRAW ..	Paragraph 231, 932
MACHINERY AND IMPLEMENTS—See also <i>Agricultural</i> —, <i>Binders</i> , <i>Chaff-cutters</i> , <i>Cultivators</i> , <i>Farm</i> —, <i>Graipes</i> , <i>Labour-saving</i> —, <i>Milling</i> —, <i>Ploughs</i> , <i>Sweathe Turners</i> , <i>Tedders</i> , <i>Threshing</i> —	270,
	337, 509, 516, 520, 528, 529, 551, 576, 687,
	697, 768, 795, 807, 854, 922, 927, 935, 1157,
	1165, 1243, 1303, 1373, 1511, 1659
Co-operative Purchasing	725, 772, 898, 1251
Cost Increased by Proposed Duties	689, 935,
	1612-1613, 1620-1621, 1625, 1666, 1803,
	1835, 1857
MACHINERY COST PER ACRE—See paragraphs <i>Annual</i>	
<i>Outgoings</i> .	
McKINLEY TARIFF	2001
MADAGASCAR	2009
MAIDSTONE	1051, 1462-1463
MAIZE—See also <i>Broken</i> —, <i>Green</i> —, <i>Indian Corn</i> 178-180,	
	208, 295, 564, 743, 1148, 1230, 1251, 1297-
	1298, 1438, 1458, 1503, 1631, 1648
Food of Poor .. 547, 772, 871, 1105, 1123, 1148, 1734	
Import Duty Suggested .. 213-214, 293, 382, 393,	
	503, 517, 547, 612, 617, 620, 861, 1025,
	1074, 1111, 1148, 1489, 1491, 1563, 1568,
	1572, 1589, 1599, 1616, 1636, 1645, 1662,
	1678, 1689, 1691, 1724, 1734, 1760, 1762,
	1765-1766
On Brewing Maize .. 547, 817, 861, 942, 1101,	
	1506, 1547, 1568, 1594, 1603, 1611, 1616,
	1623, 1638, 1650-1651, 1667, 1709,
	1712, 1763
On Feeding Maize .. 564, 828, 942, 1115, 1141,	
	1148-1149, 1548, 1574, 1611, 1617, 1631,
	1638, 1650-1651, 1666, 1720
Undesirable .. 295, 572-573, 649, 789, 871,	
	910, 1092, 1123, 1138, 1198, 1558, 1562,
	1581, 1590, 1621, 1650, 1656, 1675, 1688,
	1695, 1701, 1711, 1722, 1770, 1783
On Feeding Maize .. 773, 899, 913,	
	928, 1114-1115, 1157, 1490, 1496, 1525-
	1526, 1528, 1538, 1549, 1551, 1559, 1562,
	1564-1566, 1602, 1613, 1624, 1632, 1672,
	1681, 1718, 1783, 1876
Undesirable for Feeding .. 564, 1148, 1568, 1720, 1762	
Cattle	723, 1074, 1101, 1148
Horses	1105, 1115, 1174
Pigs .. 723, 743, 1074, 1101, 1105, 1115,	
	1123-1124, 1131, 1138, 1141, 1517, 1764
Used for Brewing .. 1075, 1103, 1115, 1525, 1678	
Competes with Barley .. 208, 861, 1507, 1547,	
	1603, 1734, 1765
Used for Feeding .. 294-295, 1075, 1149, 1273,	
	1626, 1765
Cattle .. 503, 547, 587, 630, 723, 830, 871,	
	1130, 1138, 1148, 1538, 1564
Horses	657, 1105, 1283
Pigs .. 772, 905, 1105, 1115, 1130, 1138, 1152	
Poultry	503, 1283
Sheep	1130, 1563
MAIZE FLOUR	742, 1765
MAIZE GRITS	1297-1298
MAIZE MEAL	800, 913, 1105, 1355, 1746
MAIZE STARCH .. 327, 741, 1267, 1364-1365, 1367,	
	2004, 2010
MALAY ARCHIPELAGO	1266
MALLOW, CO. CORK	880-881
MALT .. 14, 15, 18, 26, 698, 1499, 1506, 1639, 1671, 1676	
MALT COOMBS	494
MALT TAX	206, 610, 1159, 1496
Re-imposition Desired	693-694, 1655
Repeal Reduced Barley Prices	610, 1496
MALTA	1415
MALTING	1490, 1499, 1504, 1594, 1743
MALTING BARLEY .. 212, 330, 381, 575, 775, 866, 902,	
	1148, 1249, 1504
Cultivation at Home .. 521, 1236, 1496, 1594,	
	1611, 1620
Import .. 568, 649, 1291, 1304, 1499, 1674	

MALTING BARLEY—*continued*.

Import Duty Suggested ..	573, 612, 888, 1148,
1157, 1306, 1490-1491, 1504, 1506, 1525,	
1567, 1569, 1580, 1606, 1639, 1671, 1676,	
1701, 1707, 1716, 1721, 1743	
Not Desired ..	547, 1525, 1639, 1767
Prices ..	610, 629, 694, 698, 726, 775, 930, 1157,
	1159, 1239, 1547, 1620
Reduced by Free Admission of Maize ..	861,
1547, 1603, 1611, 1638, 1678, 1734, 1765	
MALTON ..	900-904
MALTSTERS ..	902, 1290, 1421
MANCHESTER ..	252, 255, 297, 732, 755, 898, 909,
	1132, 1293, 1519, 1811
MANGOLD ..	135-137, 215, 510, 560, 586, 688, 868, 938
MANGOLD SEED ..	937, 2003

MANUFACTURED STUFFS—

Import Duty Desirable ..	719, 821, 855, 887, 910,
919, 928, 952, 1130, 1483, 1490, 1495-1497,	
1500, 1502, 1510, 1514, 1597, 1608, 1628,	
1697, 1712, 1719, 1730, 1737, 1747, 1762,	
1765, 1771, 1794, 1833, 1835	
Undesirable ..	1503, 1527, 1550, 1587, 1613,
	1641, 1816-1817
MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS ..	843, 869, 1548
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES ..	502, 592, 1603, 1835
MANURE See also <i>Artificial—, Basic Slag, Farm-</i>	
<i>yard—, Fertilisers, Guano, Nitrates, Phos-</i>	
<i>phates, Pig—, Potash, Soot, Superphosphate</i>	
<i>of Lime</i> ..	226, 328, 551, 576, 597, 618-619, 687,
	768, 805, 826, 890, 916, 940, 1056, 1449,
	1462-1464, 1989

Cost per Acre—See paragraphs *Annual Outgoings*.

Home Supply Increased by Proposed Duties ..	1058,
1516, 1808, 1829, 1909	
Increased in Value by Stall-feeding ..	586-587,
	799, 807, 1296, 1816
Pigs kept for ..	776, 1141, 1491
MANURING ..	239, 510, 755, 845, 850, 865, 918, 1079, 1196
MARES ..	523, 771, 879, 925
MARGARINE ..	310, 315-316, 919, 1395, 1403, 1405-
	1409, 1417, 1522-1523, 1995
Effect of Adulteration Act ..	315-316, 901, 1404,
	1406-1407, 1409, 1414-1415
Foreign Competition at Home ..	161, 314-315,
1403-1404, 1428, 1439, 1522, 1834	
From Germany ..	1406-1407
Holland ..	1404-1409, 1440, 1834
Foreign Import Duties ..	1407, 1430
Prevent Exports ..	1403, 1408, 1417
	1428, 1434
Import Duty Suggested ..	1404, 1520-1522,
	1524, 1836

MARGARINE FACTORIES ..	1404, 1406, 1408, 1522, 1803
MARKET—See also <i>London—</i>	355, 357, 528-529, 608, 611,
	714, 917, 1129, 1152

MARKET GARDENING—See also <i>Asparagus, Beans,</i>	
<i>Brine Goods, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbages,</i>	
<i>Carrots, Fruit, Gherkins, Lentils, Onions,</i>	
<i>Peas, Potatoes, Turnips, Vegetables</i> ..	199, 200,
	252-270, 340, 387, 552, 591, 813, 815, 904,
	943, 944-945, 956, 992, 1110, 1381, 1383,
	1449, 1469

Draft Questions on ..	482-485
Foreign Competition ..	257, 259, 550, 677, 952, 983
Import Duty Suggested ..	941, 947, 952-953
Increase in Acreage ..	255, 549, 591, 814, 944, 952,
	985, 992, 1226

MARKET ORGANISATION ..	258, 327, 334, 529, 535, 777,
	786, 1004, 1010, 1024, 1120, 1287
Improved ..	605, 810, 898, 902, 988, 1061
Non-existent ..	529, 578, 761, 803, 820
Satisfactory ..	330, 838, 870, 1020
Unchanged ..	571, 801, 816, 940, 1154, 1163
MARKET TOLLS ..	285, 605, 606, 870
MARSH LAND ..	548-549
MAYO ..	748-749, 751-754, 759, 1632
MEADOW LAND ..	1886

MEAL—See also under Specified names	21, 26, 33, 1296,
	1345, 1436, 1536, 1589, 1602, 1703

Import Duty Suggested ..	1506, 1651, 1697, 1701,
	1756, 1760

MEAT—See also *Beef, Carcasses, Dead—, Fresh—, Lamb,*

<i>Live—, Mutton, Partially Cured—, Pork,</i>	
<i>Poultry, Scotch—, Tinned—</i>	181-192, 220, 271, 306,
	354, 504, 1094, 1097-1098, 1100-1101, 1143,
	1198, 1435, 1466, 1630, 1661, 1786, 1803,
	1833, 1848, 1850, 1876, 1906, 1915, 1951-
	1952, 2011

Colonial Competition ..	584, 798, 1075, 1643,
	1801, 1855, 1884

Foreign Competition at Home ..	285, 719, 767,
	770-771, 798-799, 847, 911, 914, 928, 983,
	1091-1092, 1101, 1389, 1450, 1493, 1757,
	1781, 1788, 1800-1801, 1808, 1812, 1818-
	1819, 1826, 1834, 1853, 1879, 1882, 1886,
	1900, 1928, 1942, 1949, 1952, 1954, 1993,
	1995-1996

Import ..	355, 598, 758, 762, 799, 802, 809,
	1093, 1101, 1237, 1386, 1389, 1421, 1476,
	1527, 1815, 1851, 1896, 1903, 1913, 1927,
	1965, 1976, 1992, 1996, 1998, 1945

Import Duty Suggested ..	694, 752, 793, 797, 817,
	855, 872, 1091, 1098, 1450, 1493, 1521,
	1553, 1808, 1821, 1843, 1847, 1850, 1860,
	1865, 1871, 1873-1874, 1887, 1890, 1892,
	1935, 1988

Beneficial.. ..	383, 394, 547, 583, 594, 608,
	773, 782, 1073, 1092, 1491, 1785, 1792,
	1796-1797, 1799, 1800, 1808-1809, 1810,
	1816, 1820, 1829, 1832, 1837, 1843, 1846,
	1852, 1880, 1893, 1973

If Taxes Reduced ..	284, 1814, 1839, 1861, 1863
To Farmers ..	865, 1198, 1503, 1516,
	1557, 1775, 1782, 1783, 1786-1787, 1792,
	1794, 1799, 1805, 1808, 1811, 1812, 1818,
	1822, 1831, 1845-1847, 1857,
	1863, 1886, 1889

Higher Duty desired ..	284, 286, 288, 817, 1864,
	1870, 1873, 1876, 1878, 1880, 1884-1887,
	1890, 1892

Prices would Rise ..	644, 694, 1773,
	1783-1784, 1788, 1797-1798, 1800, 1805,
	1810-1811, 1813, 1815, 1822-1823, 1829,
	1845, 1850-1851, 1853, 1858, 1862,
	1882, 1995, 1999

Prices Unchanged ..	843, 1092, 1100, 1198,
	1788, 1809, 1810, 1814, 1813, 1845,
	1848-1849, 1851, 1873, 1880, 1889,
	1890, 1983, 1998

Undesirable ..	284, 801, 1812, 1848, 1851,
	1856, 1857, 1860, 1888, 1991

Imported should be Branded ..	289-290, 636,
	762, 881, 928, 1101, 1515, 1771, 1819,
	1822, 1827, 1864, 1885, 1912, 1918, 1954,
	1957-1958, 1963-1964, 1977, 1980-1981,
	1982-1983, 1926, 1933, 1938, 1940, 1954,
	1957, 1963, 1965, 1980-1981, 1986, 1989,
	1994-1995

Imported to be sold under License ..	983, 1493, 1618,
	1760, 1818, 1853, 1938, 1952, 1954, 1965,
	1996-1997

Prices ..	73-82, 104, 161-162, 181-196, 279, 284,
	339, 358, 771, 809, 843, 1093, 1198, 1475,
	1784, 1799, 1805, 1808, 1811, 1818, 1827,
	1858, 1865, 1908, 1923

Profits ..	272, 281, 504, 602, 619, 1091, 1093, 1829,
	1987, 1999

MEAT INSPECTION ..	1091, 1900, 1908, 1916, 1980
--------------------	------------------------------

MEAT PACKING ..	1094, 1109
-----------------	------------

MEATH COUNTY ..	755-756, 771-772, 829, 1194-1198,
	1236, 1252

MEDITERRANEAN ..	677, 963, 1433
------------------	----------------

MERCHANDISE MARKS ..	958, 1101, 1105, 1131, 1412,
	1837, 1880, 1883, 1996

MERCHANTS ..	1062, 1462
--------------	------------

		Paragraph
METHODS OF CULTIVATION	..	253, 255, 511, 686, 697, 705, 764, 874
Improving	..	48, 273, 529, 530, 552, 593, 1013, 1079
Preference to Colonies would require No Change..	520,	806, 920, 923, 928
METHYLATED SPIRIT	..	681
MEXICO	..	1266, 1372
MIDDLEMEN	..	251, 1453, 1676, 1821, 1829
MIDDLINGS	..	292, 1402, 1503
MIDLANDS	..	517
MILCH COWS	..	715, 736, 751, 916, 1226
MILK—See also <i>Condensed—, Desiccated—, Frozen—, Separated—, Skim—,</i>	271, 273, 315, 330, 510, 533,	539, 540, 568, 680, 687, 711, 714, 721, 723, 735-736, 880, 895-896, 901, 916-917, 921, 924, 1133, 1151, 1230, 1244, 1252, 1401, 1407, 1564, 1927
Freight Rates	..	279, 519, 577, 880, 1450
Import	..	355, 1396, 1438, 1966
Import Duty Suggested	..	1492, 1521, 1789, 1807, 1813-1814, 1828, 1844
Prices	..	275, 311, 568, 735, 911, 921, 924, 1405, 1888
Reduced	..	271, 274, 575, 678, 766, 920, 924, 1070
Satisfactory	..	538, 870, 1070
Used for Feeding	..	295, 895, 1116, 1124, 1133, 1138
MILK SUPPLY	..	271, 307, 493, 678, 1269
MILKING	..	341, 880, 897, 916, 931, 1071, 1877
Labour Cost	..	912, 931, 1027
MILLING INDUSTRY	..	200, 321-327, 573, 592, 627, 789, 1165, 1170, 1173, 1303, 1314, 1317-8, 1325, 1432, 1458, 1505, 1526, 1588, 1670, 1683, 1738, 1759
Decline of	..	541, 1125, 1298, 1553, 1557
Employment Decreased in	..	885, 1437, 1439, 1443
Hampered by Small Home Production of Wheat	..	1159, 1167, 1177-1178, 1290, 1497, 1529
Home Methods Superior to Foreign	..	1165, 1167, 1178, 1301, 1349, 1758
Import Duty suggested	..	710, 757, 1183, 1371, 1673, 1490, 1667, 1677, 1712, 1744, 1866, 1868
Beneficial to	..	497, 532, 689, 762, 805, 865, 1164, 1169, 1174, 1180, 1354, 1488, 1492, 1509, 1532, 1575, 1587, 1590, 1603, 1655, 1676, 1714, 1739, 1750, 1753, 1758
Employment Increased by	..	532, 821, 919, 1169, 1355, 1438, 1443, 1489, 1508, 1511, 1533, 1546, 1551-1552, 1583-1584, 1625, 1661, 1709, 1710, 1715, 1756, 1863
Of no benefit to..	1528-1530, 1606, 1624, 1626,	1692, 1714, 1751, 1756, 1866
Increasing at Ports	..	324, 836, 1165, 1288, 1304, 1322, 1346, 1467, 1530, 1729
Injured by Dumping of Flour	..	1170, 1179, 1290, 1304, 1317, 1345, 1348, 1506
Flour Imports	..	799, 801, 885, 1166, 1284, 1296, 1314, 1331, 1342, 1349, 1350, 1441, 1498, 1581, 1688, 1735, 1741, 1745, 1766
Foreign Competition at Home	..	801, 805, 820-821, 831, 884, 890, 917, 1173, 1180-1182, 1280, 1286, 1301-1302, 1307-1308, 1312, 1314, 1323, 1341-1342, 1350, 1352, 1356, 1360, 1370, 1440, 1512, 1534, 1672, 1679, 1686, 1709, 1732, 1736, 1757-1758, 1760
Foreign Import Duties	..	1319, 1418, 1434
Registration Duty a Benefit	..	1184, 1308, 1317, 1552, 1651, 1761
Sunday Labour Abroad	..	1313, 1340
Wages	..	1315, 1323, 1353, 1441
MILLING MACHINERY	..	1165-1166, 1170, 1180, 1303-1304, 1346, 1355, 1736, 1752
MILLS—See also <i>Country—, Dock—, Factories, Flour—, Oatmeal—, Port—, Roller—, Town—, Water—,</i>	1167, 1176, 1179, 1302, 1313, 1348-1349, 1480	
Closed	..	323, 326, 532, 541, 612, 799, 865, 1176, 1298, 1308, 1350
Re-started if Flour Taxed	..	612, 821, 1323

		Paragraph
MILLISLE RETTING EXPERIMENT.—See <i>Flax Retting.</i>		
MITCHAM	..	943-947
MITE..	..	956
MIXED FARMING	..	494, 1543
MIXED FLOUR	..	1292, 1310, 1342, 1347, 1524
MIXED OATMEAL	..	1360, 1362
MONMOUTH	..	220, 273, 838-841, 1227-1229, 1782
MOROCCO	..	1265
MOTOR CARS	..	523
MOTOR PLOUGH	..	922
MOTOR POWER	..	559, 581, 935
MOULD	..	246, 1082
MOUNTAIN CATTLE	..	803
MOUNTAIN LAND	..	1231
MOWERS	..	1241
MULLINGAR	..	756
MUNSTER	..	1185, 1874
MURRAIN	..	1961
MUSTARD	..	550, 937-938, 1223
MUSTARD SEED	..	257, 813, 1225
MUTTON—See also <i>Ewe—, Frozen—,</i>	146-147,	304, 518, 699, 749, 778, 883, 894, 1097, 1123, 1182, 1225, 1356, 1465, 1842
Colonial Competition..	..	1097, 1388, 1856
Foreign Competition at Home	..	277, 282, 822, 1093, 1807, 1852, 1854
Import	..	181-186, 191-193, 276, 590, 1097, 1387, 1389, 1774
Import Duty suggested	..	1551, 1593, 1682, 1774, 1790, 1816, 1820, 1852, 1854, 1856, 1862, 1871, 1883, 1946
Beneficial to Farmers	..	565, 1774, 1777, 1782, 1786, 1799, 1820, 1874
Prices	..	280, 497, 518, 718, 825, 851, 894, 1093, 1115, 1150, 1225, 1238, 1278, 1782, 1862, 1974
NATAL	..	1109
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MEAT TRADERS' ASSOCIATIONS	..	1091
NAVIGATION LAWS	..	12, 1484
NAVY	..	1007
NEWBURY	..	1888
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE	..	227, 323, 1184, 1464, 1872
NEWPORT, MON.	..	838
NEWTOWN BUTLER, IRELAND	..	909
NEW ZEALAND	..	314, 385, 764, 843, 909, 989, 1059, 1387, 1424, 1465, 2012
Competition from	..	758, 890, 1113, 1149, 1264, 1395
In Mutton	634, 890, 1097, 1388-1389, 1465, 1856	
Emigration to..	..	907, 1444
NITRATES	..	1202
NORFOLK	..	199, 215-216, 256, 260, 272, 276, 322, 326, 551, 566, 662, 699, 703, 1223, 1442, 1468, 2047-2'48
Co-operation in	..	1244-1245
NORTH AMERICA	..	17, 1174, 1431, 1872
NORTH IRELAND	..	228, 252, 742, 889, 1241, 1614
NORTH-WESTERN ENGLAND	..	1203
NORTHERN ENGLAND	..	253, 255, 608, 1116, 1230, 1303-4
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE	..	216, 271, 303, 332, 336, 343, 574, 637, 1152, 1183, 1254, 1540
NORTHUMBERLAND..	..	201
NORWAY	..	315, 1265, 1406
NOTTINGHAM DAIRY FARMERS' CLUB	..	318, 652
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE	..	215, 651, 610, 612, 1225, 1439, 1463
NURSERY AND SEED ASSOCIATION	..	993
NURSERY GARDENING	..	993, 1382
NUTS	..	1075
OAK BARK	..	928
OASTHOUSES	..	242, 998, 1006, 1017, 1058, 1076-1077

		Paragraph
OATMEAL—See also <i>Mixed</i> —	.. 18, 207, 592, 1123, 1357—1358, 1360—1362	
Colonial Competition in	.. 207—208, 532, 1330, 1350, 1356—1357, 1359, 1570	
Dumping ..	207, 594, 1359, 1362—1363, 1505	
Foreign Competition	.. 207, 532, 590, 592, 1278, 1293—1294, 1301, 1350—1353, 1357—1363, 1505	
In Colonies ..	.. 1361, 1417	
Foreign Import Duty ..	1418, 1420, 2010, 2012	
Freight Rates..	.. 1278, 1358, 1460	
Import ..	.. 207, 627, 1294, 1307, 1353—1354, 1359, 1362	
Import Duty Suggested ..	1355, 1489, 1505, 1508, 1702, 1711, 1728	
Desirable ..	594, 1361, 1489, 1509, 1695, 1746	
Imported should be marked ..	1353, 1362, 1489, 1771	
Prices ..	207, 1330, 1358—1359, 1473, 1739	
OATMEAL MILLS ..	.. 592, 1361	
OATS—See also <i>Rolled</i> —, <i>Scotch</i> —, ..	18, 133, 292—203, 208, 212—213, 226, 353, 504, 509—510, 522, 538, 543, 565, 587, 603, 625, 671, 756, 863, 881, 889, 891, 911, 937, 1129, 1270, 1295, 1356, 1427, 1435, 1568, 1589, 1611, 1631, 1650—1651, 1677, 1734, 1765	
Acres 125—130, 177, 202—203, 1223, 1230, 1614, 1744		
Increased ..	123, 127, 131, 202, 208	
Bounties on ..	.. 18, 21	
Cultivation in Ireland ..	176, 203—204, 208, 522, 538, 591, 594, 632, 764, 905, 1124, 1238, 1538, 1560, 1570	
Colonial Competition ..	212, 627, 1295, 1614	
Foreign Competition ..	203, 526, 590, 594, 889, 920, 1237, 1284, 1288, 1292, 1295, 1351, 1356—1358, 1360, 1434	
Import ..	172—177, 212—213, 564, 803, 1283, 1689	
Import Duty Suggested ..	21, 212, 393, 1025, 1483, 1489, 1502, 1506, 1643, 1685, 1708, 1718	
Desirable ..	212—213, 594, 827, 1554, 1560, 1566, 1568, 1570, 1573—1574, 1577, 1581, 1587, 1617, 1689, 1699, 1701, 1725	
Undesirable ..	1490, 1633, 1634, 1666, 1711, 1717, 1768	
Prices ..	14, 65, 69—72, 82, 101—103, 522, 524, 526, 538, 544, 718, 743, 911, 1230, 1238, 1270, 1420, 1435	
Decreasing ..	71, 207, 528, 538, 575, 707, 749, 804, 807, 822, 851, 867, 1505, 1570, 1582, 1633	
Increased by Prop. Duty ..	564, 1538, 1542—1543, 1581, 1583	
Unaffected by Prop. Duty ..	213, 1489, 1589, 1712	
Profits ..	202—204, 543, 671, 691, 699, 803, 832, 889, 1295	
OCCASIONAL LABOUR ..	.. 987	
OFFALS (OF GRAIN)—See also <i>Bran</i> , <i>Middlings</i> , <i>Pol-lard</i> , <i>Sharps</i> , <i>Shorts</i> , <i>Wheat</i> —, ..	291—292, 799, 928, 1137, 1152, 1157, 1160, 1170, 1177, 1283—1284, 1289, 1296—1297, 1392, 1540, 1623—1624, 1652, 1691	
Cheapened by Proposed Duty on Flour ..	497, 517, 564, 602, 612, 789, 837, 928, 1131, 1170, 1174, 1489—1490, 1503, 1535, 1540, 1545—1546, 1550—1552, 1566—1568, 1573—1574, 1585—1588, 1593—1594, 1601, 1618, 1625, 1632, 1644, 1646, 1654, 1661—1662, 1664, 1667, 1669, 1670, 1684, 1688, 1693, 1698—1699, 1700—1701, 1705—1706, 1708—1714, 1716—1722, 1725—1728, 1731—1732, 1734, 1746, 1749, 1753, 1755, 1762	
Export of ..	376, 1169, 1170, 1179, 1184, 1347, 1612, 1623, 1655	
Import ..	1174, 1297, 1329, 1337—1338	
Import Duty Suggested ..	689, 1493, 1525, 1573, 1679, 1702, 1746, 1750	
Not Desirable ..	789, 1609, 1701, 1722, 1757	
Prices ..	382, 649, 1157, 1171, 1184, 1329, 1337, 1540, 1570, 1587, 1602, 1697, 1709, 1726, 1732	

		Paragraph
OFFALS (OF GRAIN), Prices— <i>continued</i> .		
Increased by Flour Imports ..	517, 592, 1154—1155, 1179, 1317, 1320, 1334, 1345, 1391, 1571, 1622, 1692, 1726, 1732, 1737, 1766	
Lowered by Proposed Duties ..	286, 290—291, 305, 517, 762, 865, 1355, 1533, 1542, 1669, 1737—1738	
Registration Duty on	1073, 1184, 1289, 1347, 1708	
Retained Abroad ..	.. 497, 789, 801, 1155, 1325	
Supply Increased by Duty on Flour ..	573, 620, 694, 769, 913, 1074, 1125, 1147, 1183, 1488, 1503, 1528, 1538, 1540, 1542, 1549, 1553—1554, 1558—1559, 1561—1562, 1564, 1568—1569, 1570—1571, 1574—1578, 1580—1581, 1584—1585, 1588, 1591, 1602, 1608—1609, 1613, 1616, 1651, 1663, 1665—1666, 1668, 1671, 1673—1676, 1678, 1681, 1684, 1689, 1690, 1695, 1697—1699, 1702—1710, 1713, 1716—1718, 1723—1724, 1728—1731, 1749—1750, 1757, 1868, 1929	
Supply Diminished through Flour Imports ..	779, 872, 885, 1155—1156, 1284, 1302, 1330, 1348—1349, 1612, 1745, 1757	
OFFALS (OF ANIMALS)—See also <i>Bones</i> , <i>Horns</i> , <i>etc.</i> ..	599, 602, 1098, 1150, 1780—1781, 1894, 1909, 1911, 1914, 1919	
OIL—See also <i>Cod-liver</i> —, <i>Cotton-seed</i> —, <i>Linseed</i> —, ..	1369, 1370, 1420, 1425, 1431, 1441, 1512	
Foreign Import Duty on ..	1370—1371, 1420, 1425, 1428, 1430, 1512, 2001, 2009	
OIL CAKE—See also <i>Artificial Food</i> , <i>Cotton-seed</i> —, <i>Linseed</i> —, ..	296, 503, 509, 608, 694, 696, 736, 758—759, 885, 895, 1154, 1184, 1283, 1369, 1371, 1430, 1457, 1480, 1563, 1566—1568, 1630, 1721, 1816, 1850, 1879, 2009	
Cattle Fattened on ..	281, 1163, 1341, 1369, 1370—1372, 1433, 1512	
Foreign Duties Benefit British Farmer ..	1369, 1370, 1428, 1431, 1441	
Freight Rates..	858, 1459, 1462—1464, 1470	
Import ..	292, 1346, 1369, 1370, 1372—1373, 1430—1431, 2001	
Should be Free ..	789, 1370, 1430, 1598, 1600, 1602, 1618, 1628, 1634, 1649, 1666—1667, 1672, 1770, 1783, 1808, 1846, 1876	
Import Duty Desired ..	1420, 1431, 1512, 1692, 1728, 1850, 2001	
Price ..	291, 696, 759, 1229, 1537, 1625	
OIL CAKE TRADE ..	.. 1430, 1459, 2001	
OIL SEED ..	.. 1266—1267, 1425—1426, 1876	
OLD AGE PENSIONS ..	.. 578	
ONIONS ..	.. 557—558, 937—938, 941, 1514	
Foreign Competition in ..	.. 558, 938, 1292	
OPTION DEALING ..	.. 1472—1474, 1477	
ORANGES ..	.. 965—966	
ORCHARDS—See also <i>Grass</i> —, ..	252, 259, 985, 1036, 1070	
ORKNEY ..	.. 1441	
ORNAMENTAL SHRUBS ..	.. 996	
OSIERS ..	.. 906	
OUTPUT ..	310, 329, 330, 1166, 1178, 1290, 1335, 1473	
Of Flour ..	.. 1176, 1300, 1350	
Wheaten Starch ..	.. 1365—1366	
Proposed Duties would Increase ..	1168, 1492, 1511, 1559, 1837	
OVER-PRODUCTION—See <i>Surplus Product</i> .		
OVERTIME ..	.. 776, 876, 884	
OXFORDSHIRE ..	220, 313, 619, 670, 929, 930—931, 1400, 1690	
PACKAGE TAX ..	.. 965, 979, 983, 1514	
PACKING PRODUCE FOR MARKET ..	.. 268—269, 301—302, 540, 961, 1109, 1112, 1401, 1477	
PAISLEY ..	.. 741—742	
PAPER ..	.. 1186, 1918	

	Paragraph
PARTIALLY-CURED MEAT	1515
PARTLY-MANUFACTURED ARTICLES	1269 <i>et seq.</i>
PASTEURISATION	735, 896, 1134
PASTORAL FARMERS	1644, 1783, 1884
PASTURE—See also <i>Grass, Permanent</i> —	220, 273, 691, 780, 827, 883, 1071, 1222-1223, 1285, 1628, 1744
PASTURE ACREAGE	139-140, 220, 889, 1070
PASTURE FARM	25, 1140
PASTURE LAND .. 140, 205, 1224-1226, 1231-1233, 1545,	1640, 1650
PATENT STILL SPIRIT	1525
PEACHES AND PEARS	956, 966
PEARL BARLEY	1293, 1352, 1355, 1505
PEAS.. 18, 133, 204, 208-209, 1105, 1130, 1270, 1293,	1419
Import Duty Desirable .. 213-214, 1489, 1638, 2003	
Undesirable	1618, 1876
Price	14, 208, 743, 1467, 2003
PEASANT PROPRIETORSHIP 624, 731, 754, 947, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
PEAT MOSS	636, 935, 1918
PEDIGREE ANIMALS	278-279, 1109, 1990
PEMBROKE	1250
PERISHABLE ARTICLES	941
PERMANENT PASTURE	925, 1221, 1226
PERQUISITES .. 302, 342, 344, 495, 511, 529, 534,	826, 839, 876, 884, 903, 1117
PERSIA	1265
PERTSHIRE	601, 1250
PERU	1266
PESTS—See <i>Blight, Fungoid—, Insect—, Mite, Mould.</i>	
PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	1408
PHOSPHATES	728
PIECEWORK .. 344, 692, 868, 884, 939, 945, 1014, 1018	
PIG—See also <i>Hog, Young—</i> , .. 145, 271, 299, 335, 534,	
Prices .. 280, 305-306, 522, 538, 630, 803, 809, 829,	913, 1119, 1150, 1152, 1154, 1798, 1836
PIG DISEASE	1102, 1136, 1394
PIG FEEDING .. 204-295, 298-299, 522, 724, 1116,	1124, 1138, 1140-1141, 1152, 1160, 1283,
Abroad.. .. .	1394, 1507
Duty on Bacon Desirable for .. 808, 913, 1114,	1124, 1138, 1836, 1889
Duty on Flour Desirable for .. 290, 1131,	1540-1541, 1697, 1709, 1753
Duty on Barley Undesirable for .. 295, 1149, 1764, 1848	
Experiments	1105, 1109, 1141
Methods	724, 763, 1102
Profit	1119, 1141, 1385, 1526, 1764
PIG FOOD .. 503, 1115, 1127, 1130, 1138, 1152	
Barley used as .. 1074, 1105, 1115, 1124, 1130,	1138, 1141, 1149, 1152, 1507, 1547, 1677,
Maize used as.. 293, 772, 899, 905, 1074, 1105, 1115,	1124, 1130, 1138, 1141, 1517, 1764
Milk used as	905, 1116, 1124, 1133, 1134
Potatoes used as	881, 905, 1124, 1138
PIG HOUSING	1102
PIG KILLING	1126, 1133-1134
PIG OFFAL	1105, 1139
PIG MANURE	776, 1134, 1141, 1491
PIG PRODUCTS .. 146-147, 181-186, 193-195, 1517	
PIG RAISING .. 277-278, 543, 724, 729, 799, 915,	1109, 1114, 1134-1138, 1149-1150, 1764
By Labourers	769, 776, 881, 1134
On Small Holdings	630, 1134, 1140
PINERS	1993
PLANTS	993, 1380, 1426, 1435, 1515
PLEURO-PNEUMONIA	385, 507, 1951
PLOUGH—See also <i>Motor</i> —	1241-1242
PLOUGH-HORSES	841
PLOUGHED LAND	630, 1182
PLOUGHING—See also <i>Steam</i> — .. 588, 611, 830, 841, 1541	
PLOUGHMEN	341, 495, 595, 795, 897
PLUM .. 254, 258, 260-262, 269, 955	
Import	266, 958, 966, 968, 970, 986
PLUM-GROWING	954-955, 985

	Paragraph
PLUM PULP.. .. .	254, 266, 959, 960, 971, 991
POISONOUS INSECTS	1918
POLE PULLERS	1029
POLICE	946, 1152
POLLARD .. 292, 532, 789, 881, 1284, 1624, 1734-1735	
POLLED ANGUS	521, 752
PONTEFRAC	904
POOLS	1024
POOR LAW AUTHORITIES	12, 347, 819, 897
POOR RATE.. .. .	913, 1830, 1887
POPULATION .. 49, 52-53, 271, 353, 355-6, 626, 707,	1106, 1145, 1161, 1536
PORK—See also <i>Fresh—, Salted—</i> .. 14, 304, 1143	
Import .. 20, 299, 883, 1102, 1105, 1118, 1123,	1130, 1134, 1138, 1149, 1393, 1450, 1788
Prices .. 280, 497, 812, 1118, 1135, 1152, 1853, 1862	
Production	497, 1118, 1491, 1496, 1525
Proposed Duty .. 541, 1130, 1138, 1150, 1889	
Beneficial.. 383, 541, 1114, 1123, 1129, 1130, 1143,	1782, 1792, 1862, 1871, 1883, 1946
Would Increase Bacon Import.. 299, 1143, 1149	
PORRIDGE	1123
POT MILLS .. 1167, 1176, 1526, 1612, 1630	
Compete with Country Mills .. 323, 1321, 1344,	1348, 1524, 1729, 1749
Export Offals	1169, 1177, 1179, 1623
POT SLAUGHTERING .. 288, 385, 1794, 1951, 1955,	1958-1959, 1961
POTUGAL	1264, 2012
POT BARLEY	1355, 1505
POTASH	510
POTATO—See also <i>Early—, Scotch—, Seed—</i> , .. 135-136, 550,	560, 688, 756, 1633
Export	510, 597, 2002, 2007, 2008
Foreign Competition at Home .. 214, 216-217, 550,	556, 597, 813, 833
Freight Rates .. 216, 557-558, 577, 753, 869, 941,	972, 1451, 1466
Import .. 388, 543, 550, 655-656, 753, 813, 889,	1364, 1379, 1591
Import Duty suggested .. 27-28, 31-33, 36-37,	212, 217, 270, 295, 306, 317, 321, 394, 621,
753, 817, 1025, 1492, 1514, 1591, 1619,	1658, 1678, 1693, 1704, 1765, 1872
Manuring	555, 586, 597
Marketing	833, 859
Price .. 504, 543, 597, 655, 718, 753, 813, 833, 952,	1872, 2601
Spraying	510, 655, 719
U.S.A. Import Duty.. 217-218, 504-505, 602, 833, 1591,	1678, 1721, 1766, 2001, 2006
Used as Pig Food	881, 905, 1124, 1138
POTATO CROP	504, 556, 560, 753
POTATO CULTIVATION	560, 602, 655, 794, 1225
By Labourers .. 511, 534, 881, 917, 926, 1795	
Decreased	137, 199, 215, 1223
Employment in .. 505, 552-553, 560, 859, 1182	
In Germany	559
Ireland	510
Increased .. 137, 199, 214-216, 548, 619, 814, 970,	1225, 1230-1231, 1291
Profit .. 214, 257, 494, 543, 597, 651, 813, 832, 867, 937	
POTATO DISEASE	510, 655-656
POTATO SEED	510
POTATO SPIRIT	388, 550, 559
POULTRY—See also <i>Dead—, Fowls, Turkeys.</i> 875, 878, 1226,	
1491	
Import	590, 904, 1402
Price	875-876, 904
Import Duty suggested .. 394, 904, 1491	
POULTRY FARMING .. 540, 591, 624, 785, 875, 904, 1496	
Co-operation in .. 909, 918, 1154, 1244, 1252, 1254	
Profits	544, 874
POULTRY FOOD	503, 874-875, 1283, 1594
PREFERENCE BY FRANCE	1132
PREFERENCE TO COLONIES .. 1179, 1623, 1642,	1653, 1716, 1723, 1868, 1892
Benefit to Colonies .. 512, 709, 1116, 1131, 1854, 1865	

PREFERENCE TO COLONIES—continued.

Paragraph

Counteracts Benefit of Duties Proposed	542, 1637, 1654, 1787, 1789, 1812, 1892
Desirable	385, 389, 393, 594, 682, 773, 789, 802, 892, 1172, 1482, 1643, 1646, 1675, 1679, 1682, 1833, 1860, 1864, 1867, 1869, 1873, 1878
On Bacon	1125
Barley	866, 1506
Corn	376, 389, 572, 641, 704, 844, 881, 1100, 1147, 1498, 1648, 1684, 1689, 1697, 1733, 1743, 1868
Corn and Flour	1184, 1597, 1608, 1866
Dairy Produce	627, 797, 1820, 1874, 1880-1881
Fruit	960, 1513
Maize	1691
Manufactured Stuffs	1597
Meat	627, 801, 1820, 1857, 1874, 1879, 1880, 1935, 1936
Seeds	1869
Encourages Emigration	844
Free Entry Undesirable	501, 583, 769, 797, 817, 860, 941, 1031, 1502, 1637, 1643-1652, 1654, 1659, 1678, 1687, 1695, 1716, 1764, 1816, 1859, 1861-1862, 1864, 1877, 1970
Increases Import from Colonies	519, 531, 1147, 1646, 1652, 1656, 1868, 1880
Injures Home Producers	1115, 1868
Lowers Home Prices	564, 1502-1503, 1587, 1723
Necessitates no Change in Home Cultivation	520, 579, 644, 676, 806, 843, 899, 920, 923, 928, 947, 982, 1002, 1012, 1018, 1050, 1053, 1064, 1077, 1081, 1084, 1637
Prevents Duty Raising Prices	519, 526, 817, 1508, 1634, 1651, 1654, 1656, 1684, 1793, 1820, 1857, 1862, 1865
Raises Home Prices	1180, 1628, 1647, 1833
Should be Reciprocal	389, 1036, 1172, 1490, 1651, 1701, 1719, 1860, 1863, 1867, 1869, 1876-1877, 1885
Stimulates Colonial Production	564, 1059, 1142, 1147, 1502, 1613, 1627, 1657, 1867, 1888
Undesirable	542, 1564, 1645, 1658, 1683, 1769, 1822, 1864, 1881, 1892
On Cheese	1400
Corn	497, 1564, 1653-1656, 1658, 1688, 1704
Flour	1684
PREFERENCE TO U.K.—See also under Colonies, Reciprocal Preference, Reciprocity	390, 1133, 1684, 1835
PRESERVATIVES	958, 960, 1103
PRICES	19-20, 24, 49, 57, 74-75, 82, 84, 269, 529, 600, 605, 609, 694, 709, 753, 811, 818, 842, 1041, 1049, 1152, 1160, 1349, 1351, 1483, 1487, 1546, 1602, 1608, 1636, 1765, 1890
Of Bacon	297, 915, 1115-1116, 1120-1121, 1127, 1130, 1135, 1389, 1392, 1516, 1810
In Denmark	297, 1119, 1127, 1132
U.S.A.	297, 809, 1121, 1123, 1129, 1392, 1401, 1476-1477
Barley	65, 71, 82, 101, 201, 206, 521, 524, 544, 647, 743, 775, 863, 718, 845, 1151, 1159, 1238, 1293-1294, 1298, 1505, 1606, 1611
Beef	275, 280, 506, 587, 770, 807, 822, 899, 1093, 1387, 1797, 1800, 1819, 1820, 1849, 1862, 1871, 1971, 1974, 1986
Beet	1157
Bran	290, 292-293, 592, 661, 1160, 1164, 1170, 1315, 1434, 1551, 1537, 1581, 1624, 1668, 1695, 1711, 1715, 1735, 1766
Bread	376, 643, 843, 952, 1160-1161, 1670, 1675, 1677, 1685
Abroad	843, 1696
Brewing Materials	1671
Butter	309, 311-314, 331, 534, 537, 540, 717, 896, 898, 900, 914-915, 919, 1112-1113, 1197, 1399, 1400, 1524, 1773, 1786, 1811, 1834, 1886, 1892

PRICES—continued.

Paragraph

Cattle	274, 281, 313, 524, 559, 803, 828-829, 1776, 1797, 1812, 1815, 1819, 1832, 1852, 1861, 1871, 1878, 1913, 1925
Cereals	104, 225, 358, 1195, 1230, 1238, 1402
Cheese	308, 312, 533, 794, 920, 924, 1473, 1477
Cider	1383, 1385, 1513
Coal	904
Corn	13, 15-17, 21, 47, 82-83, 225, 524, 580, 690-691, 698, 700, 756, 780, 789, 825, 827, 838, 881, 911, 919, 931, 1008, 1161, 1221, 1226-1229, 1230-1231, 1363, 1497, 1545, 1560, 1583, 1587, 1619, 1628-1629, 1630, 1634, 1651, 1674
Dairy Produce	307, 311, 321-322, 518, 889, 1790, 1878, 1881
Fat Cattle	537, 807, 890, 930, 1519, 1790, 1802, 1811, 1848, 1888, 1922
Feeding Stuffs	586, 1105, 1248, 1538, 1566, 1592, 1626, 1629, 1715, 1813
Flax	1186, 1192, 1235
Abroad	1186, 1192-1193
Flour	376, 379, 742, 746-747, 1171, 1295, 1303, 1309, 1323, 1327, 1329, 1339, 1502, 1535, 1623-1633, 1741
French	324-325, 1301, 1305, 1325, 1330, 1333
U.S.A.	1167, 1174, 1178, 1299, 1300, 1304-1305, 1308-1309, 1313-1314, 1317, 1319, 1321, 1325, 1327, 1330, 1332-1333, 1341-1342, 1346, 1476, 1760
Food Stuffs	83, 355, 526, 806, 1527, 1727, 1818, 1850
Fruit	257-258, 266, 555, 949, 955, 964-965, 971, 974, 976, 979, 981, 983, 986, 992, 994, 1070
Fruit Baskets	962
Grain	20, 685, 808, 832, 1283, 1491
Hay	229, 508, 759, 771, 785, 921, 930-931, 1070, 1669
Hops	248, 1001, 1003, 1006, 1010, 1012-1014, 1017, 1021, 1024, 1026-1028, 1033, 1038, 1043, 1045, 1055, 1061-1062, 1067, 1069, 1076-1078, 1082, 1084-1086, 1088, 1376, 1492
In Germany	1043, 1378
Horses	523, 544, 748, 846, 850
Horticultural Products	943, 993, 1381, 1385, 1478, 1515
Implements	1072, 1157, 1252, 1548, 1625, 1645
Irish Cattle	506, 709, 751, 774, 863, 1774, 1787, 1828, 1831, 1874
Lard	301, 1116, 1136, 1409, 1519
Linseed Oil	1368-1369, 1423
Live Stock	731, 893-894
Machinery	1240-1243, 1620
Maize	295, 1148, 1564-1566, 1631, 1648, 1724
Malting Barley	610, 698, 775, 888, 902, 1239, 1620
Manure	518, 618, 679, 917, 1450
Margarine	919, 1408
Meat	73, 76-82, 104, 286, 358, 718, 771, 919, 1094, 1097-1098, 1799, 1805, 1808, 1829, 1833, 1847, 1852-1853, 1856, 1882, 1890, 1937, 1952, 1994
U.S.A.	1388, 1475, 1801
Milk	274-275, 538, 568, 678, 735, 766, 870, 880, 911, 921, 924, 1396, 1405, 1888
Mustard	550, 938
Mutton	822, 825, 851, 1093, 1150, 1225, 1782
Oats	65, 71, 101, 207, 213, 526, 528, 538, 544, 564, 632, 749, 804, 807, 867, 920, 1270, 1356, 1420, 1435, 1560, 1568, 1582, 1589, 1712
Oatmeal	207, 1296, 1330, 1358, 1473, 1508
Offals	305, 582, 592, 1074, 1105, 1157, 1170-1171, 1174, 1184, 1297, 1392, 1490, 1503, 1525, 1535, 1540, 1546, 1552, 1562, 1568, 1570, 1574, 1587, 1601, 1625-1626, 1641, 1647, 1655, 1692, 1697, 1698, 1705, 1713-1714, 1718, 1721, 1725, 1726-1728, 1732, 1745, 1753

PRICES—continued.

Oil	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1428
Oil Cake	..	..	296	759,	1163,	1367,	1369,	1370-	1371,	1431, 1441, 1512
Onions	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	558, 937-938
Pigs	..	305-306,	522,	538,	809,	829,	913,	915,	1119,	1141, 1150, 1152, 1254, 1836
Pork	..	..	812,	822,	1118,	1130,	1135,	1450,	1853	..
Potatoes	..	..	215,	543,	550,	558,	597,	753,	756,	813, 889, 952, 1364, 2001, 2008
Poultry	..	..	..	..	321,	875-876,	904,	918,	1253	..
Salt	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1121
Seeds	..	..	..	..	..	..	538,	728,	920,	1248
Sheep	..	..	..	574,	699,	858,	894,	1798,	1976	..
Starch	..	..	..	..	..	..	741,	1365-1366,	1511	..
Store Cattle	..	..	275,	280,	537,	586,	599,	751,	758,	803, 812, 867, 914, 1553, 1776, 1778, 1810, 1816, 1830, 1930, 1947, 1956
Straw	..	226,	494,	678,	769,	808,	911,	1234,	1918	..
Sugar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1200
Sugar Beet	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1201
Tobacco	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	239, 1195
Vegetables	..	..	215,	510,	785,	807,	937,	941,	1381,	1467, 2003
Wheat	..	..	23-25,	29,	33-35,	55-60,	65-72,	82,	85-96,	99, 100-104, 107, 115-116, 118, 202, 210, 326, 376, 494, 526, 543-544, 596, 610, 669, 704, 739, 740, 745-746, 765, 843-844, 862-863, 867, 873-874, 882, 884, 889, 890, 892, 944, 1007, 1159, 1221, 1226-1227, 1230, 1329, 1338, 1435, 1497-1498, 1501, 1503-1504, 1541, 1568, 1584, 1610, 1613, 1630, 1634-1635, 1642, 1667, 1693, 1723
U.S.A.	..	..	..	..	743,	1318,	1336,	1474,	1480	..
Wool	..	..	701,	727,	748,	759,	763,	863,	1278,	1395
PRICES AFFECTED BY CO-OPERATION	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	539, 581, 713, 728-729, 922, 968, 1245, 1247-1248, 1250, 1252-1253
PRICES AFFECTED BY DUTIES PROPOSED	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	517, 564, 797, 827, 843, 953, 965, 1044, 1492, 1510, 1541, 1565, 1582, 1599, 1601, 1606, 1612, 1615, 1621, 1625-1626, 1641, 1764, 1777, 1803, 1815-1816, 1823-1824, 1838-1839, 1841, 1848, 1850, 1862, 1865, 1883
Higher Prices	..	..	..	..	497-498,	503,	512,	519,	547,	578, 778, 782, 793, 805, 811, 817, 821, 887, 1164, 1481-1482, 1498-1499, 1500, 1517, 1520, 1525, 1539, 1553, 1572, 1592, 1601, 1641, 1680, 1778-1779, 1785, 1789, 1794, 1796, 1804, 1807, 1817, 1820-1822, 1824, 1833, 1840, 1856, 1862
Barley	..	..	..	..	942,	1294,	1558,	1563,	1568,	1588, 1639
Beef	..	..	..	..	773,	1787,	1817,	1822,	1883	..
Bread	..	..	..	..	532,	573,	589,	933,	1488,	1498, 1597, 1649, 1752
Butter	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1520, 1872
Cattle	..	..	..	..	1777,	1784,	1791,	1794,	1828,	1832, 1935
Corn	..	..	..	..	536,	811,	1071,	1449,	1532,	1536, 1539, 1545, 1551, 1554, 1556, 1558, 1560, 1564, 1570, 1575, 1577-1578, 1580-1581, 1583, 1585, 1588, 1591, 1593, 1601-1602, 1609, 1615, 1619, 1628-1629, 1632, 1637, 1640, 1644-1646, 1651, 1660, 1674-1676, 1785
Fat Cattle	..	..	..	..	836,	1536,	1790,	1792,	1800,	1833, 1876-1876
Feeding Stuffs	..	..	..	..	773,	1629,	1586,	1613,	1619, 1620,	1626, 1636, 1645, 1649, 1849
Flour	..	..	..	..	1502,	1526,	1532,	1687,	1708,	1724, 1750, 1753, 1759, 1866
Fruit	..	..	..	..	..					

PRICES AFFECTED BY DUTIES PROPOSED—Higher Prices
—continued.

Meat	..	..	1774, 1782-1784, 1787-1788, 1796-1799, 1800, 1805, 1810-1815, 1823, 1827, 1831, 1845, 1850-1851, 1858, 1880, 1882, 1889, 1934-1936, 1946, 1969, 1990, 1999
Milk ..	..	..	 1789, 1807
Oats ..	..	..	 1538, 1543
Oilcake ..	..	..	 1511-1512
Pork ..	..	..	 541, 1130
Wheat ..	..	676, 1354, 1498-1499, 1502, 1542, 1566, 1578, 1626, 1651, 1670, 1688, 1756	
Lower Prices ..	..	1540, 1545, 1549, 1613, 1654, 1693, 1733, 1770, 1790	
Feeding Stuff ..	..	837, 1536, 1546, 1574, 1593, 1608, 1618, 1632, 1650, 1693-1694, 1703, 1731	
Offals ..	..	1170, 1503, 1542, 1544, 1550-1552, 1564, 1566, 1573, 1585-1586, 1588, 1594, 1602, 1644, 1646, 1654, 1667, 1669, 1670, 1688, 1695, 1698, 1700-1701, 1705, 1717, 1719, 1720-1722, 1725-1726, 1727, 1734, 1749	
Prices Steadied ..	..	1025, 1487, 1509, 1559, 1560, 1562, 1573, 1576, 1591, 1713, 1785, 1826, 1831-1832, 1883, 1939, 1988	
Prices Unchanged ..	..	382, 519, 541, 842, 862, 881, 1114, 1156, 1169, 1489, 1542, 1547, 1574, 1602, 1615, 1645, 1656, 1740, 1760, 1765, 1774, 1793, 1814, 1825, 1833, 1842, 1844-1845, 1849, 1854, 1863, 1865	
Bread ..	..	579, 919, 1074, 1179, 1198, 1502, 1561, 1588, 1668, 1671, 1691, 1695, 1741, 1746, 1771	
Butter ..	..	 1397, 1841, 1843	
Corn ..	..	1493, 1508, 1548, 1568, 1571, 1579, 1580, 1584-1585, 1586, 1594, 1598, 1601-1602, 1605, 1615, 1622, 1625, 1627, 1636, 1645, 1653-1656, 1668, 1691, 1699, 1710, 1716, 1725, 1746, 1762	
Dairy Produce ..	..	 1773	
Flour ..	..	1486, 1608, 1737, 1739, 1748-1749, 1753-1754, 1755, 1757	
Food Stuffs ..	..	689, 762, 862, 1504, 1524, 1646	
Fruit ..	..	 969	
Grain ..	..	602, 1503, 1618, 1641, 1712	
Hops ..	..	1010, 1031, 1058, 1081	
Margarine ..	..	 1521-1522	
Meat ..	..	778, 1092, 1100, 1198, 1776, 1805, 1809, 1829, 1831, 1848-1849, 1851, 1873, 1889, 1976, 1983, 1988, 1995, 1998	
Wheat ..	..	689, 742, 843, 1147, 1156, 1528, 1563, 1609, 1611, 1683, 1693, 1704, 1707, 1715, 1734, 1744, 1752, 1755	
PRICES AFFECTED BY REGISTRATION DUTY ..	..	704, 1061	
Bread Unaffected ..	..	933-934, 1528, 1599	
Corn Unaffected ..	..	642, 693, 698, 704, 742, 1156, 1289, 1290, 1569, 1600, 1656, 1679, 1700, 1727-1728	
Offals Cheapened ..	..	817, 1164, 1289, 1537, 1668, 1708	
PRICES AFFECTED BY TRUSTS ..	..	1114, 1474-1475, 1478-1479	
PRICES DECREASED ..	..	18, 82-83, 117-119, 342, 356, 509, 513, 519, 521, 539, 544, 569, 595, 604, 610-611, 614, 621, 629, 651, 691, 695, 701, 707-708, 711, 774, 786, 807, 813, 814, 822, 829, 832, 842, 846-847, 851, 853, 867, 884, 923, 939, 944, 949, 1060, 1151-1152, 1161, 1222-1224, 1232-1233, 1235, 1238-1239, 1590, 1592, 1635	
Bacon ..	..	 1102-1103, 1393, 1516	
Barley ..	..	575, 585, 610, 612, 629, 661, 707, 807, 930, 1238-1239, 1506, 1569, 1616	
Beef ..	..	518, 538, 707, 755, 774, 790, 794, 825, 925, 1884, 1991, 1998	
Butter ..	..	 924, 1871, 1893	
Cattle ..	..	 528, 825, 1395, 1930, 1973	

PRICES DECREASED—continued.

Paragraph

Fruit	970, 983
Hops	1003, 1005, 1014, 1036
Milk	920, 924, 1070
Store Cattle .. 528, 537, 587, 711, 751, 793, 804, 811, 1071, 1802, 1819	
Wheat	58, 104, 205, 528, 568, 610, 637, 671, 707, 718, 803, 847, 911, 1231, 1234, 1239, 1496
Wool	595, 790, 822, 825, 925, 1782, 1817
Decreased through Imports	519, 537, 550, 767, 775, 802, 949, 1049, 1114, 1233, 1430, 1505, 1970
Barley	709, 817, 1198
Beef	603, 770, 1115, 1388, 1921
Butter	771, 803, 917, 1113, 1395, 1403, 1777, 1821
Cattle .. 719, 766, 1386, 1786, 1827, 1928, 1983	
Corn	884, 1399
Flour	532, 742, 1287, 1297, 1309, 1320, 1328, 1345, 1571
Fruit	910, 949, 955, 957, 968, 970-971, 979, 980, 986, 994-995
Hay	889, 921, 1351, 1402, 1497
Hops	1007, 1021-1022, 1034, 1037, 1044, 1052, 1055, 1059, 1061, 1069, 1077, 1079, 1080, 1082-1083, 1089, 1377-1378
Meat .. 719, 758, 762, 809, 847, 928, 930, 983, 1091, 1093, 1194, 1450, 1475, 1865, 1879, 1898, 1913, 1923, 1934, 1944-1945, 1996	
Oatmeal	1363, 1505, 1570
Oats	1288, 1295, 1358, 1631, 1638
Starch	1365-1366
Wheat	575, 707, 1273, 1292, 1329
PRICES INCREASED .. 18, 538, 809, 1036, 1061, 1525, 1593, 1604, 1641, 1686, 1693, 1820, 1844	
Offals	1154-1155, 1179, 1317, 1391, 1716, 1726, 1766
Wool	276, 279, 597, 699, 846
PRICES RISBOROUGH	230, 933
PRIZES	273, 879
PRODUCE—See also Dairy—, Farm—, and Specified	
Produce .. 30, 81, 605, 879, 909, 940, 961, 1145, 1164, 1395, 1644, 1652, 1701, 1844, 1880	
Co-operative Marketing	1247-1250
Freight Rates	601, 890, 926, 1163, 1647
Import Duty Suggested	1484, 1548, 1593, 1628, 1711, 1765, 1779, 1792, 1804, 1816, 1859, 1888, 1892, 1973
Prices .. 731, 804, 920, 923, 1152, 1235, 1288, 1592, 1773, 1779	
PROFITS .. 531, 533, 671, 708, 711, 790, 853, 856, 857, 1171, 1254, 1294, 1425, 1535, 1608, 1693, 1705, 1879	
Abroad	602-603, 926, 1298, 1406, 1781
Ceased .. 494, 503, 548, 569, 610, 618, 629, 696, 700, 748-749, 853, 857, 925, 938, 944, 1237, 1449, 1502, 1547, 1582	
In Bacon Curing	1134
Barley Growing	543, 629, 726, 1119, 1233, 1236, 1239
Butter Making	896, 1402, 1834, 1871
Corn Cultivation	257, 580, 629, 637, 647, 660, 662, 672, 699, 766, 771, 780, 802, 812, 825, 838, 931, 1161, 1221, 1224-1228, 1232, 1237, 1446, 1485, 1497, 1528, 1539, 1545, 1560, 1583, 1661, 1674, 1712, 1805
Flax Cultivation	1235
Fruit Growing	260, 975, 980, 986
Grazing .. 758, 798, 812, 930, 1519, 1947, 1951, 1952, 1956	
Hay Production	930-931
Hops .. 1001, 1003, 1005, 1008, 1012, 1014, 1021, 1024, 1036, 1038, 1055, 1061-1062, 1067, 1069, 1076-1077	
Meat Production	281, 602, 1093, 1194, 1198, 1237, 1386, 1394, 1797, 1816, 1843
Milling	1705

PROFITS CEASED—continued.

Paragraph

Wheat Growing	494, 514, 543, 548, 549, 605, 610, 766, 873, 911, 944, 1010, 1221, 1223-1224, 1229, 1233, 1239, 1485, 1714, 1763
Ceased through Imports	550, 749, 766, 930, 952, 968, 1079, 1273, 1284, 1302, 1317, 1348, 1451, 1492, 1809, 1819, 1910
Decreased	204, 215, 221, 273, 499, 514, 523, 569, 595, 600, 603, 613, 647, 651, 679, 691, 705, 707, 755, 758, 763, 766, 798, 813, 825, 850, 865, 867, 879, 929, 944, 949, 1151, 1159, 1164, 1182
In Bacon Curing	298, 1113, 1119, 1133
Barley Growing	521, 691, 832, 1236
Butter Making	544, 710, 1113, 1237, 1385, 1402, 1806
Dairying	307, 312, 906, 914, 924
Fruit Growing	257, 983, 1069, 1070
Grazing .. 272, 275, 281-282, 533, 584-586, 601, 748, 752, 755, 758, 791, 798, 809, 810, 825, 828, 832, 853, 890, 930, 1070, 1232-1233, 1235, 1237, 1385, 1519, 1800, 1809, 1827, 1830, 1836, 1861, 1871-1872, 1921	
Hop Growing	822, 1009, 1014, 1021, 1023-1024, 1027, 1036, 1051, 1060, 1067, 1075, 1078, 1082, 1085, 1087
Lard Manufacture	1105
Market Gardening	256-257, 494, 550, 655-656, 813-814, 867, 937, 944
Meat Production	272, 537, 544, 619, 771, 780, 809, 925, 1797, 1807, 1854
Pig Raising	298-299, 543, 1105, 1119, 1526
Poultry Farming	544
Sheep Farming	273, 791, 1389
Decreased by Imports	595, 768, 775, 809, 846, 949, 996, 1091, 1093, 1105, 1232, 1363, 1374, 1404, 1726, 1787, 1807, 1888, 1906, 1972, 1985, 1988
By Proposed Duties	919, 1628, 1631
Increased	809, 1173
By Proposed Duties	498, 541, 565, 608, 904, 1018, 1038, 1535, 1547, 1676, 1688, 1778, 1791, 1806, 1812, 1820, 1892, 1921
PROFITS ON—Bacon Production	1119, 1129, 1394, 1516-1517, 1810
Barley Cultivation	521, 587, 637, 775, 863, 1786
Butter Making	312, 714, 722, 911, 919
Beef Production	309, 518, 537, 793, 1194, 1394, 1780-1781, 1805, 1816, 1821, 1827, 1883-1884, 1971, 1974
Corn Growing	838, 1163, 1533, 1632, 1684, 1688, 1705, 1714
Creamery	329-330, 722, 919
Dairying	273, 306-307, 533, 845, 880, 911, 924, 1396, 1854, 1878
Farming	534, 544, 553, 620, 664, 689, 708, 818, 922, 925, 1832
Fruit Growing	949, 954-955, 968, 975-976, 994
Grazing	505, 586, 591, 662, 699, 718, 751-752, 758, 766, 770, 773, 780, 785, 798, 809, 838, 889, 914-915, 1070, 1194-1195, 1236-1237, 1778, 1786, 1805, 1809, 1827, 1830, 1832, 1836, 1849, 1871, 1874, 1919, 1922, 1946-1947
Hop Growing	997, 1000, 1003, 1006, 1008, 1011, 1018, 1020, 1023, 1036, 1045, 1055, 1075, 1087
Horse Breeding	784, 799, 925
Margarine Manufacture	919, 1406
Meat Production	504, 602, 609, 619, 1091, 1093, 1829, 1987, 1999
Milling .. 324, 919, 1165, 1173, 1184, 1284, 1304, 1321, 1339, 1340, 1342-1344, 1348, 1355-1356, 1679, 1739, 1747, 1759, 1866	
Oat Cultivation	202, 543, 671, 691, 699, 803, 832, 889, 1295
Seed Crushing	257, 1512

		Paragraph
PROFITS ON—continued.		
Sheep Farming ..	274, 276, 543, 699, 748, 776,	
	812, 883, 1182	
Sugar-Beet Growing ..	807, 1199, 1201	
Tobacco Growing ..	1196	
Vegetable Growing ..	504, 510, 543, 889	
Wheat Growing ..	199, 494, 514, 543, 549, 610,	
	629, 691, 699, 745, 832, 874, 889, 911, 945,	
	1159, 1225, 1233, 1236, 1239, 1270, 1273,	
	1385, 1558, 1584, 1594, 1635, 1667, 1763	
PROTECTED HOME MARKET ..	935, 1147, 1513	
PROTECTION DESIRABLE ..	12, 583, 778, 820, 951-952,	
	1494, 1520, 1637, 1642, 1671, 1680, 1686,	
	1826, 1830	
PROVENDER TRADE ..	1284	
PROVISION TRADE ..	16, 1114, 1400, 1478	
PROVISIONAL SCALE OF DUTIES ..	393	
PRUNING ..	1072	
PUBLIC WORKS LOAN COMMISSIONERS ..	886	
PURCHASE OF LAND BILL ..	352, 371-372, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>	
PURE BEER BILL ..	517, 698, 1770	

QUARANTINE ..	1943, 1955
QUEEN'S COUNTY ..	807, 1237-1239, 1558, 1587, 1836

RABBITS ..	1861
RAILWAY ..	118, 205, 525, 756, 941, 962, 978, 988,
	1071, 1163, 1179, 1469, 1470, 1875
Accessibility to ..	494, 496, 544, 831
Attracts Labour ..	511, 515, 545, 903, 912, 926,
	931, 1071, 1152
In Ireland ..	593, 761, 1137
RAILWAY CLASSIFICATION UNSATISFACTORY ..	787, 963,
	972, 977, 988, 1071, 1163, 1177
RAILWAY FACILITIES ..	260, 261, 262, 279, 360-361,
	535, 593, 623, 730, 890, 924, 962, 988,
	1025, 1450
RAILWAY RATES—See also <i>Rebates</i> ..	114, 216, 217, 230, 231,
	232, 257, 261, 283, 365, 556, 571, 581,
	605, 615, 672, 678-679, 692, 701, 756,
	795, 858, 878, 909, 932, 941, 972, 983,
	1001, 1161, 1177, 1313, 1450-1451, 1453,
	1455, 1458-1459, 1465, 1468, 1823
Abroad..	540, 556, 823, 962, 989, 1003, 1128, 1412,
	1446, 1471, 1779, 1856
In France ..	258, 263, 557-559, 963, 972, 990, 1470
Ireland ..	530, 590, 788, 793, 890, 1447-1448
Increase Cost of Production ..	799, 858
Reduction Desired ..	362, 365, 556, 593, 660, 685, 705, 714,
	767-768, 772, 790, 795, 841, 858, 864,
	876, 880, 903, 922, 941, 977, 995, 1024,
	1027, 1177, 1180, 1230, 1355, 1446-1447,
	1449, 1451-1452, 1455, 1458, 1467-1468,
	1470, 1799, 1848
In Ireland ..	260, 261, 624, 631, 761, 772, 788,
	792, 801, 810, 820, 1100, 1236, 1447-1449,
	1450-1451, 1453-1454
By Co-operative Action ..	366, 714, 730, 816, 878
Reduction Conceded ..	519, 530, 672, 708, 788,
	870, 899, 933, 972, 977-978, 987-988, 1003,
	1022, 1079, 1090
Revision Necessary ..	363, 577, 672, 971, 1449,
	1462, 1680
RAILWAY RATES ON CATTLE ..	284, 601, 719, 858, 1447-1448
Fruit ..	909, 963, 1384, 1453-1454
Grain ..	685, 794, 1328, 1450-1451, 1455
Hay and Straw ..	933, 1450, 1454
Market Gardening Produce..	558, 941, 1449
Milk ..	577-578, 880
Potatoes ..	216, 558, 753, 869, 941, 1451, 1466
RAILWAY WORKS ..	588, 987
RAINHAM ..	938
RAMS ..	1850
RAPE SEED ..	209, 1467, 1531, 1600
RASPBERRIES ..	970
RASPBERRY PULP ..	960

		Paragraph
RATES AND TAXES—See also <i>Agricultural Rates Act,</i>		
<i>Income Tax, Local Rates, Malt Tax, Market Tolls,</i>		
<i>Poor Rates, Taxes, Tithes</i> ..		
	525, 788, 887, 932, 1162,	
	1289, 1648, 1657, 1781, 1793, 1813,	
	1837-1838, 1840, 1881	
Abroad..	1109, 1405, 1856, 2005	
Increasing ..	621, 697, 947, 1501	
Relieved by <i>Agricultural Rates Act</i> ..	607, 891,	
	990, 1164, 1198, 1597, 1602-1604, 1609, 1650	
RATHDRUM, IRELAND ..	1889	
RAW LARD ..	1409, 1518	
RAW MATERIAL ..	315, 329, 1161, 1185, 1258, 1405,	
	1553, 2011	
Lower Duty than <i>Mnfctd. Articles</i> ..	583, 821, 1508, 1703	
Should be Admitted Free ..	532, 719, 910, 1130, 1483,	
	1490, 1496, 1510, 1527-1528, 1597, 1702,	
	1707, 1730, 1737, 1740, 1747, 1759, 1762,	
	1832, 1834	
From Colonies ..	1498, 1513	
Sources of Supply ..	1269-1281	
Stores to be Treated as ..	587, 597, 1099, 1843,	
	1900, 1915-1916, 1947	
RAW WOOL..	1817	
REBATE ..	941, 1331, 1342, 1347	
RECIPROCITY ..	300, 389, 801, 1129, 1417, 1423, 1519,	
	1642-1643, 1675, 1683, 1869	
With Colonies..	1086, 1172, 1490, 1651, 1701, 1719,	
	1860, 1863, 1867, 1869, 1876-1877, 1885	
RED CURREANTS ..	968	
REFINED COTTON OIL ..	1523	
REFINED LARD ..	1409-1410	
REFRIGERATED BEEF ..	279, 1093-1095, 1098, 1939	
REFRIGERATOR VANS ..	898	
REGISTRATION DUTY ..	291-292, 376, 384, 390, 393,	
	594, 1184, 1289, 1290, 1345, 1347, 1493, 1526-	
	1527, 1629, 1632, 1718, 1759, 1818	
Beneficial to Agriculture ..	1164, 1289, 1304, 1555,	
	1579, 1589, 1674, 1740	
Beneficial to Milling ..	594, 1164, 1184, 1308, 1317,	
	1538, 1552, 1651, 1748, 1761	
Flour Imports Reduced by ..	1290, 1302, 1480, 1739	
Offals Cheapened by ..	817, 1164, 1289, 1537,	
	1668, 1708	
Price of Bread Not Affected by ..	933-934, 1528, 1599	
Price of Corn Not Affected by ..	642, 693, 698,	
	704, 742, 1156, 1289, 1290, 1569, 1600,	
	1656, 1679, 1700, 1727-1728	
REMEDIAL MEASURES ..	19, 217, 284, 317, 364, 375, 393,	
	934, 1481-1531, 1744, 1771	
REMEDIAL MEASURES—Proposed by the <i>Agricultural</i>		
<i>Committee:—</i>		
	354 <i>et seq.</i>	
Agricultural Machinery ..	395	
Animals and Meat ..	383, 385, 394	
Bacon, Pork, Hams ..	383, 394	
Barley Duties..	381, 393	
Canadian Store Cattle ..	385	
Dairy Produce ..	382, 386, 394	
Eggs ..	394	
Feeding Stuffs ..	394	
Fertilizers ..	394	
Flour Duties ..	382, 394	
Fruit and Vegetables ..	387	
Hay and Straw ..	394	
Hops ..	389, 394	
Land Purchase ..	370	
Local Taxation ..	368	
Maize Duties ..	382, 393	
Market Gardening ..	387	
Meal Duties ..	394	
New Agricultural Branches ..	367	
Oats Duties ..	393	
Potatoes ..	388, 394	
Poultry ..	394	
Preference ..	389	
Rye Duties ..	393	
Transport ..	365	
Wheat Bounty ..	373	
Wheat Duties ..	375, 376, 393	

	Paragraph
RENT—See also <i>Cottage—, Farm—, House—</i> ..	335-338,
506, 638, 663, 696, 711-712, 731, 790,	
917, 926, 937, 954, 1141, 1638, 1764,	
1781, 1848	
In Ireland Too High ..	763, 804, 1494, 1561, 1844,
	1882, 1888
Reduction Effected ..	523, 528, 539, 632, 791,
	853, 917, 1587
Increased by Proposed Duties ..	536, 572, 999,
1542, 1601, 1620, 1628-1629, 1635, 1640,	
1646, 1692, 1698, 1794, 1825, 1848, 1856,	
1879, 1881, 1973	
Lower Abroad ..	525, 764, 768, 926, 938-939,
1297, 1356, 1405, 1830, 1834, 1844, 2005	
Lower in Colonies ..	1356, 1643, 1856
Reduced by Fall in Prices ..	509, 539, 610, 638, 642,
708, 807, 924, 1151-1152, 1635	
Reduction ..	515-516, 518, 544, 613, 619,
677, 692, 699, 706, 780, 803, 832, 862,	
864, 902, 1022, 1071	
Reduction Counterbalanced by Increased Labour	
Cost ..	544, 830, 851
RETALIATION DESIRABLE ..	250, 596, 617, 820, 861,
964, 1012, 1418, 1429, 1431, 1484,	
1493, 1500, 1565, 1628, 1784, 1891	
Against U.S.A. ..	1430, 1513, 1679, 1882, 1958, 2002
On Hops ..	1027, 1048, 1492, 2005
RETALIATION INADVISABLE ..	517
REVENUE INCREASED BY PROPOSED DUTIES ..	616, 1482,
1496, 1500, 1549, 1563, 1571, 1576, 1578,	
1580, 1584, 1603, 1613, 1625, 1627, 1654,	
1687, 1692-1693, 1700, 1707, 1726,	
1794, 1809	
RICE ..	1286, 1289
RICE STARCH ..	1511, 2005
Dumping from Continent ..	1366, 1411, 1442
Foreign Duties Prevent Exports ..	1366, 2005
RIVER DRAINING ..	846
ROADS ..	499, 519, 641, 693, 697, 945, 1667
ROLLED BACON ..	1124
ROLLED OATS ..	207, 1355, 1362, 1467, 1508
ROLLER MILLS ..	323, 1176, 1329
ROMNEY MARSH ..	1045
ROOT CROPS ..	200, 217, 222, 584, 654, 687, 744, 786,
	900, 1195, 1230, 1491
Dependent on Store Cattle ..	587, 808, 822, 1101,
	1738, 1810
ROSCOMMON ..	283, 336, 622, 727, 759, 791-792, 1466,
	1672, 1774
ROSES ..	259, 1380-1381, 1419
Foreign Competition ..	993, 996, 1515
ROSSCREA, IRELAND ..	847
ROTATION OF CROPS ..	49, 220, 494, 504, 509, 543,
566, 584, 688, 705, 812, 867, 1202, 1496	
ROXBURGH ..	1234
ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY ..	273
ROYAL COMMISSIONS ON AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION ..	10
ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL TAXATION ..	369
ROYAL COMMISSION ON TUBERCULOSIS ..	1102
ROYAL ULSTER AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION ..	275, 313, 537
RUMANTIA ..	1265, 1372
RURAL POPULATION ..	589, 799, 1144-1145
RUSHES ..	755
RUSSIA ..	106-107, 234, 846, 1065, 1112, 1289,
	1420, 1891
Competition at Home from ..	207, 332, 497,
	1259, 1295, 1867
In Bacon ..	1116, 1390-1391
Oats ..	526, 1356-1357, 1360
Oilcake ..	1335, 1367, 1369, 1370-1372,
	1431, 1433
Freight Rates ..	1462-1464, 1470
Import Duties in ..	1105, 1420, 1425, 2005, 2010
Imports from ..	173, 296, 310, 1192, 1376
Butter ..	313, 915, 1112, 1397, 1400, 1773
Wheat ..	107, 526, 564, 594, 1174, 1292, 1294,
	1346, 1574, 1693

	Paragraph
RUSSIA—continued.	
Labour Conditions in ..	1295, 1371-1372, 1396
RUTLANDSHIRE ..	1452, 1541
RYE ..	14, 15, 18, 21, 131, 133, 219, 393, 920
SACCHARINE ..	510
SADDLE HORSES ..	850
SALT ..	1121, 1421, 2011
SALT HERRINGS ..	2010
SALTED PORK ..	1104, 1142
SAMPLES ..	726, 728, 902, 1290
SANFOIN ..	205, 219, 1224, 1226-1227
SANITARY REGULATIONS ..	836, 860, 958, 1999
SAUSAGES ..	1134, 1393
SCARBOROUGH ..	900
SCHOLARSHIPS ..	577, 885
SCHOOL ..	702-703, 840, 885, 918
SCHOOL GARDENS ..	570, 989
SCHOOL STANDARDS ..	496
SCILLY ISLES ..	677
SCOTCH MEAT ..	1093
SCOTCH OATS ..	1420
SCOTCH POTATOES ..	504
SCOTLAND ..	126-130, 206, 208, 222-223, 252, 263, 274,
	281, 285, 336, 345, 511, 685-687, 741,
	836, 975-976, 1187, 1232, 1270, 1278,
	1313, 1353, 1401, 1615
Co-operation ..	321, 978, 1250-1251
Dairying ..	321, 834-835, 1401
Exports Hampered by Foreign Duties ..	1387,
	1420, 2010
Foreign Competition in Oatmeal ..	1355, 1357, 1359,
	1360-1362
Foreign Oatmeal Sold as Scotch ..	1352-1353,
	1357-1359, 1360, 1362
Labour Conditions ..	342, 343, 833, 976, 1232, 1359
Meat Production ..	506, 1093, 1097, 1922, 1945,
	1972, 1999
Milling Industry ..	1176, 1287, 1350, 1352,
	1356, 1362
Potato Cultivation ..	137, 218, 504, 753
Railway Rates ..	601, 685, 977
SCOTTISH AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION ..	321, 832
SCOTTISH CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE ..	518
SCOTTISH FARMERS' SUPPLY ASSOCIATION ..	1250
SEASONS ..	535, 637-638, 696, 884, 944, 1786
SECURITY OF TENURE ..	1639, 1767
SECURITY OF TRADE ..	1114, 1481-1482, 1499, 1760
SEED—See also <i>Cotton—, Grass—, Mangold—,</i>	
<i>Mustard—, Oil—, Potato—, Rape—, Suede—,</i>	
<i>Turnip—</i> ..	205, 257, 538, 544, 727, 794,
	939, 1239, 1416, 1435, 1512, 1795
Co-operative Purchase ..	328, 714, 728,
	917, 989, 1248
In England ..	1072, 1244, 1246, 1250
Ireland ..	524, 728, 788, 847, 898, 1106,
	1251-1252
Scotland ..	1250
Export ..	1419, 2002
Import ..	1382-1383
SEED CRUSHING ..	1373, 1425, 1511, 2001
Foreign Competition at Home ..	1341, 1370, 1373,
	1428, 1512
Labour Cost ..	1371, 1372
SEED GROWING ..	814, 937, 1869
SEED MERCHANTS ..	1382
SEED OIL ..	1420, 1425, 1428, 1430, 1441
SEED POTATOES ..	1418, 1471, 1542
SELKIRKSHIRE ..	1232, 1251
SELLING, KENT ..	1003
SEPARATED MILK ..	274, 312, 330, 679, 723, 901, 905, 1134
Unsuitable for Calf-Feeding ..	311, 312, 828,
	895, 1133, 1888, 1893
SEWAGE SCHEMES—See also <i>Drainage</i> ..	496, 500, 940, 945
SHARPS ..	292, 1074, 1296, 1337, 1437, 1770
SHEARING ..	903, 1072

	Paragraph
SHEEP —See also <i>Ewes, Gist—, Rams, Store—, Suffolk—</i>	
145, 222, 285, 506, 522, 752, 757, 766, 776, 812, 838, 859, 883, 900, 925, 1235, 1841, 1956, 1967	
Decrease ..	144, 271, 618-619, 671, 691, 699, 838, 1093, 1225, 1808
Foreign Competition ..	758, 983, 1389, 1920, 1964
Import ..	603, 766, 802, 1097, 1917
Import Duty Suggested ..	1493, 1915
Beneficial ..	1782, 1784, 1797-1799, 1828, 1833
Undesirable ..	1775, 1844, 1871
Prices ..	279, 280, 524, 574, 599, 699, 711, 758, 858, 894, 1815, 1848, 1871, 1878, 1898, 1976
Profitable ..	224, 274, 276, 514, 522, 543, 594, 597, 776, 791, 845, 856, 863, 883, 925, 937, 1182, 1988
SHEEP BREEDING	273, 710, 1797, 2002
Profitable	276-277, 603, 699, 794
SHEEP DISEASE	766
SHEEP FARMING	222, 273, 690, 748, 812, 1159, 1222, 1278, 1387, 1782, 1801, 1836, 2010
Benefited by Proposed Duties ..	1801-1802
SHEEP FEEDING	619, 1234, 1551, 1563, 1778, 1847, 1984
Profitable	522, 662-663, 705, 812, 1237, 1984
Unprofitable	1225, 1836, 1988
SHEEP FOOD	509, 808, 1130, 1225
SHEFFORD	1827
SHEPHERDS	341, 495, 701, 760, 876, 884, 903, 1027
SHILLELAGH, Co. Wicklow	852
SHIPPING RATES	118, 685, 1046, 1326, 1459-1460, 1467, 1469, 1471
Canada to U.K.	685, 1460
Canada to S. Africa	1467-1468
Continent to U.K.	941
U.S.A. to London	1468
U.S.A. to S. Africa	1362, 1460, 1467
SHIRE HORSES	278, 523, 545, 856, 925
SHORTHORNS	521, 752, 803, 1226
SHORTS	1587
SHRUBS	1381-1382, 1426, 1515
SIBERIAN BUTTER	313, 1112, 1400
SINGED BACON	1132-1133
SKILLED LABOUR	498, 673, 1079
Deterioration	1022, 1082
Scarcity	514, 638-639, 651, 1162, 1689
In Hop Industry	1019, 1079
Wages	701, 939, 996
SKIM MILK	309, 543, 874, 895-896, 902
Used for Feeding	723, 759, 828, 1134, 1141-1142, 1799
SLAUGHTERING —See also <i>Cattle—, Port—</i> ..	286, 287, 335, 928, 1095, 1134, 1435, 1919, 1949, 1953, 1969, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1994, 1998
SLAUGHTERMEN	1443
SMALL FARMERS	712, 725, 785, 788, 857, 860, 892, 1088, 1635
Benefited by Co-operation ..	571, 728-729, 788, 1154
Benefited by Proposed Duties ..	1540, 1686, 1783, 1816, 1889
In Ireland	725, 756, 776, 785-786, 803, 809, 811, 889, 1186, 1239, 1782-1783, 1816, 1836, 1874
SMALL FARMS	761, 775, 794, 875, 917, 1146
SMALL FRUIT	140, 141, 252-253, 555, 906, 955-956, 958, 960, 970, 974, 983, 988, 1070
SMALL HOLDERS	317, 750, 752, 784, 938, 944, 947, 956
Benefited by Co-operation ..	606, 729, 784, 843, 1248, 1254
In Ireland	623, 634, 749, 751-752, 754, 761, 784, 1134
SMALL HOLDINGS —See also <i>Allotments</i> ..	265, 268, 318, 333, 352, 364, 370-371, 784, 956, 1110, 1144-1445, 2035 et seq.
Beneficial	588, 600, 1110, 1145
Fruit-Growing on	252, 256, 956, 987, 992, 1110, 1145
In Ireland	333, 623-624, 630, 784, 1110
In Wiltshire	1110, 1140, 1145-1146

	Paragraph
SMALL HOLDINGS —continued.	
Labour on	829, 987
Profitable	992, 1140, 1146
Should be Developed	588, 947, 1110, 1556
SMALL MILLERS	1294
SMALL PROPRIETORS	730, 921
SMALL SHOPKEEPERS	1252
SMITHFIELD MARKET	287, 289, 290, 1092, 1894
SOIL —See also <i>Virgin—</i> ..	372, 528, 544, 597, 703, 768, 1245
SOMERSETSHIRE	273, 277, 313, 336, 534-535, 1230, 1249, 1743, 1764
SOMERSETSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE ..	277, 309, 533
SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL	535
SOOT	937
SOURCES OF SUPPLY	158-160, 163-174, 178-180, 186-193, 252, 564, 975, 1174, 1269-1282, 1475, 1477
SOUTH AFRICA	989, 1133, 1406, 1413, 1503
Foreign Competition in ..	1413, 1415-1417
Import from	966, 982
Import Duties in	1133, 2009, 2012
Shipping Rates to ..	1109, 1362, 1430, 1460, 1467-1468
SOUTH AFRICAN SHIPPING RING	1468
SOUTH AFRICAN WAR	664, 997, 1049, 1071
SOUTH AMERICA	277, 300, 314, 856, 1129, 1851
Competition from	1320, 1801, 1819, 1872
Import Duties in	1129, 2009
SOUTH-EAST MIDLANDS	1224
SOUTH-EASTERN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE ..	245, 998, 1030
SOUTH FERMANAGH	252, 905-908
SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE	548-549, 550, 552, 813
SOUTH SEA ISLANDS	1267
SOUTH SOMERSET FARMERS' CLUB	309, 533
SOUTH WALES	273, 710, 714, 716-718, 1618
SOUTH-WESTERN COUNTIES	1226, 1228
SOUTH-WESTERN FARMERS' ASSOCIATION ..	1246
SOUTHERN ENGLAND	1100, 1381
SOUTHAMPTON	1095, 1466
SPAIN	967, 995, 1436
Competition from	995, 1263
Import Duties in	1423, 1427, 2005
SPALDING	1451
SPECULATION —See also <i>Contract System, Corners, Futures, Option Dealing.</i> ..	1062
SPIRIT —See also <i>Methylated—, Patent Still—, Potato—</i>	550, 1620
SPRAYING OF FRUIT	270, 907-908, 956
Hops	1030
Potatoes	510, 719
STACKING	341, 545, 767
STAFFORDSHIRE	215, 295, 297, 343, 911, 1230, 1632, 1659
Dairying	911, 1230
Labour Conditions	912, 1128
STAFFORDSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE ..	913
STALL-FEEDING	281, 719, 798, 804, 807, 822
Benefited by Prop. Duties ..	779, 1810, 1829, 1927
Unprofitable	587, 748, 807, 822, 1988
STALLIONS	523, 725, 748, 752
STARCH —See also <i>Corn—, Indian Corn—, Maize—, Rice—, Wheat—</i> ..	327, 550, 741-742, 1366, 1509-1511
Foreign Competition ..	741-742, 1364, 1366, 1423
Foreign Import Duties	742, 1423
STARCH TRADE	739, 1438
STARCH WORKS	1365, 1367-1368
STATE AID	367, 386, 525, 751, 1803, 1837
Abroad	360, 367, 737, 968, 990, 1109, 1517
STEAM PLOUGHING	841
STEAM-PRESSED HAY AND STRAW	932-933
STILTON CHEESE	309, 794
STOCK —See also <i>Dry—, Home | Grown—, Live—, Young—</i> ..	280, 354, 685, 691, 709, 838, 1228, 1250, 1296, 1448, 1528, 1787, 1816, 1832, 1877, 1993
Import	804, 1071, 1987
Import Duties Suggested ..	602, 1551, 1650, 1782, 1788, 1799, 1802, 1816, 1887
Prices	711, 894, 1363, 1553, 1882

	Paragraph
STOCK-BREEDING	504-505, 898
Benefited by Prop. Duties	1588, 1779, 1807
Profitable	274, 309, 533, 790, 1250
STOCK FARMING	1553, 1576, 1626, 1832
STOCK FATTENING	1386, 1559, 1781, 1886
STOCK FEEDING	759, 791, 1225, 1233, 1507, 1549
Duties Suggested Beneficial..	1574, 1663, 1782, 1874
Would Increase Officials ..	1542, 1571, 1573,
	1576, 1624, 1669, 1673, 1720, 1729
Undesirable	1527, 1626
STOCK RAISING	311, 812, 1194, 1231, 1941
Benefited by Prop. Duties ..	710, 881, 1750, 1786
	1810-1811, 1892, 1933
Injured by Imports of Live Stock ..	1816, 1942
Profitable	850, 867
STOCKMEN	341, 569, 1183
STONE, STAFFS	911-913
STORE CATTLE—See also <i>Canadian</i> —	273, 285-6, 506, 810,
	1231, 1816, 1825
Feeding Methods	715, 758, 808, 822, 847
Import	527, 537, 587, 541, 711, 758, 760,
	765, 775, 785, 789, 793, 799, 804, 811, 845,
	852, 1766, 1794, 1805, 1809, 1825, 1834,
	1905, 1912, 1914, 1924, 1945, 1948, 1955-
	1956, 1959, 1961, 1967, 1973, 1987-1989
Desirable	785, 789, 1766, 1805-1806,
	1810, 1825, 1897, 1905, 1912, 1914, 1945-
	1949, 1956, 1985, 1988-1989, 1990
From Canada	274, 785, 832, 1766,
	1805-1806, 1851, 1942, 1945-1946, 1956,
	1987, 1993
Injurious to Irish Farmers	636, 765, 775,
	1924, 1944
Undesirable	285, 286, 289, 385, 527, 541,
	852, 1784, 1809, 1847, 1919,
	1943, 1961, 1973, 1987
From Canada	587, 719, 751-752, 804
	845, 908, 1806, 1945, 1959, 1967
Import Duty Suggested	1776, 1979, 1990
Beneficial.. .. .	1786-1788, 1790, 1799, 1807, 1810,
	1822, 1830, 1845, 1941, 1950, 1979
Higher than on Dead Meat and Fat Cattle ..	1919,
	1920, 1963
Lower than on Dead Meat and Live Cattle ..	836
	1903, 1905, 1914, 1948-1949
Undesirable	1539, 1805-1806, 1851, 1946,
	1989, 1990
In Ireland	505-506, 662, 774, 906, 914, 1810,
	1922, 1947
Exports to England	798, 803, 1810, 1922, 1972
Prices	575, 586-587, 599, 628, 751, 758, 770, 1519,
	1778, 1787, 1802, 1805, 1816
Decreased	528, 537, 597, 711, 790, 804, 1802
Increased	275, 537, 1776, 1797, 819,
	1852, 1930, 1956
Profits	710, 718, 751, 809, 1800, 1809, 1955
Sold by Weight	530, 586
Supply insufficient	537, 771, 1948, 1951, 1991
STORE SHEEP	597, 758
STRABANE, IRELAND	234, 529
STRAITS SETTLEMENT	1264
STRAW—See also <i>Wheat</i> —	199, 203, 226, 232, 494, 543,
	618, 744, 874, 889, 930, 1239, 1270,
	1273, 1437, 1744
Freight Rates.. .. .	230, 494, 932-933, 1450
Import	229, 889, 1270, 1375, 1450, 1872, 1918
Import Duty Suggested	394, 620, 934-935, 1533,
	1619, 1669, 1695, 1725, 1872, 1918
Prices	226, 229, 544, 618, 769, 808, 874, 889, 1234,
	1270, 1402, 1564, 1918
Wheat Grown for	199, 226, 568, 575, 691, 699,
	763, 812, 867, 934, 1221, 1224-1225, 1564,
	1664, 1667
STRAW PLAIT	1514
STRAWBERRIES	252, 906, 956, 965, 970, 986
STRAWBERRY JAM	976
STRAWBERRY PULP	960
STREATHAM	1788

	Paragraph
STRONG LAND	513, 611
SUBSIDISED STEAMERS	540, 964, 966, 1293, 1471
SUBSIDY	1614, 1744
SUFFOLK	205, 215, 219, 276, 343, 346, 349, 699, 887,
	1152, 1154, 1223-1224
Barley Acreage in	1151, 1157, 1223
Labour Conditions	883, 1152-1153, 1223
Local Rates	887, 1152-1153, 1341
Pig Rearing	277, 883, 1152
Wheat Acreage	219, 1223-1224, 1336, 1459
SUFFOLK AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION ..	277, 882
SUFFOLK SHEEP	277, 883
SUGAR	254, 561, 849, 960, 1886, 2013
Import Duty Beneficial	361, 561-562, 2018, <i>et seq.</i>
Should be admitted Free	1695, 1711, 1740
SUGAR BEET	218, 360, 561-562, 688, 1200-1202, 1612
Cultivation	218, 562, 687-8, 1201, 1202 <i>et seq.</i>
Cost	360, 688, 2016 <i>et seq.</i>
Employment Increased by	563, 1200-1201, 2015
Profitable	561, 688, 1201, 2015 <i>et seq.</i>
Yield per Acre	561, 2014, 2017, 2023 <i>et seq.</i>
Factories	562, 688, 1199, 1200, 1612, 2014 <i>et seq.</i>
Home Superior to Foreign	360, 561, 688, 1199,
	1200, 1488, 2013, 2024
Prices	562
Residue for Cattle Food	563, 687-688, 1202
Saccharine Percentage	360, 1201, 2013, 2016,
	2024-5
SULPHUR	1051, 1058
SULPHURING	1030
SUMMER LABOUR	945
SUNDAY WORK	339, 916, 926, 1027
Causes Scarcity of Labour	824, 880, 926, 1027, 1877
SUPERPHOSPHATE OF LIME	510
SURPLUS PRODUCT—	325-326 983, 1033, 1326
Dumped in U.K.	497, 1039, 1142, 1351, 1446,
	1492, 1599
Corn	1644, 1653
Flour	1301, 1318, 1329, 1411
Hops	1005, 1039, 1055, 1492
Meat	1887, 1995
Oatmeal	1360
Oilcake	1369
Pig Products	1130, 1410
Starch	1364, 1366
SURREY	321-322, 337, 945, 1012, 1419, 1598, 1682
SURREY FOWLS	321-322, 875
SURTAX	1744
SUSSEX	220, 331, 872, 1079-1080, 1226, 1249
Cottage Accommodation	349, 876, 1076-1077
Hop Cultivation	240, 242, 1001, 1076, 1078-1080
Acreage Decreased	242, 1001, 1013-1016,
	1021, 1075-1076, 1078-1079
Labour Conditions	1076, 1079, 1226
Labour Plentiful	876, 1001, 1076, 1079
Milling Industry	1439, 1749, 1758
Rates	877, 1001, 1076, 1080, 1750
Wages Increased	343, 876, 1001, 1079
Reduced	1076, 1079
SUSSEX COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY ..	872
SUSSEX FOWLS	321-322, 875-876
SUTTON	1230
SWAMPY LAND	906
SWATHE TURNERS	536
SWEDEN	215, 510, 551, 868, 1225
SWEDEN SEED	551
SWEDEN	173, 582, 1112, 1263, 1372, 1390, 1392 2039,
Import Duties in	1427, 2012
SWINE FEVER	1394
SWITZERLAND—	
Condensed Milk from	1266, 1396
Import Duties in	1421
SYNTHETIC CIDER	1383
TALLOW	805
TANNING	287, 928, 1911, 1970
TASMANIA	955, 1265

	Paragraph
TAUNTON	535
TAXES	335-338, 1509, 1647, 1794, 1873
Higher at Home than Abroad ..	1647, 1827, 1844
Should be Reduced by Proposed Duties..	546, 602, 871, 881, 919, 941, 947, 1483, 1537, 1548, 1559, 1563, 1571, 1578-1579, 1584, 1598-1599, 1600-1601, 1603, 1605-1606, 1613, 1619, 1625, 1650, 1654, 1660, 1665, 1721, 1784-1785, 1792, 1796, 1809, 1814, 1826, 1838-1839, 1840, 1842, 1861, 1863, 1865, 1890
TEA	532, 625, 754, 849, 902, 1504, 1529, 1740, 1793, 1925
TEA DUTY	779, 952, 1695, 1711
TECHNICAL EDUCATION	309, 318, 320, 511, 539, 651, 673, 768, 870, 998, 1034
Abroad	306, 321, 832-835, 1110, 1121
Advocated	499, 525, 545, 553, 831, 834, 859, 871, 1121, 1128, 1451
Assisted by County Councils ..	535, 539, 545, 840, 891, 950
Assisted by Government Departments ..	525, 530, 891, 908, 918
Beneficial	519, 539, 540, 801, 1193, 1197
Gaining Ground	511, 719, 870
Lectures	525, 530, 626, 716-717, 777, 852, 854, 891, 918, 1197
Methods Criticised	515, 577, 830, 834, 1022
Not much Benefit	525, 633, 666, 840, 847, 1153
TEDDERS	536
TELEPHONES	835
TENANT—See also <i>Cottage</i> —	529, 711, 730, 781, 874, 913, 998, 2035 <i>et seq.</i>
Benefited by Agricultural Rates Act ..	607, 611, 815, 827, 864, 904, 1052, 1143, 1153
Benefited by Proposed Duties	999, 1881
Capital Invested by	1017, 1020
Not affected by Proposed Duties ..	1627, 1629, 1633, 1635, 1849
TENANT FARMER	264, 329, 529, 613, 731, 743, 924-925, 1499, 1502, 1828
Benefited by Proposed Duties	500, 769, 781, 860, 932, 1073
Not Benefited by Proposed Duties ..	1601-1602, 1638
TENANT RIGHT	256, 268, 645, 956, 1639
TEYNHAM, KENT	1030
THATCHING	341, 545, 767, 814, 869, 893
THINGOM	886
THOROUGHBREDS	523, 879
THRASHING MACHINES	1241
THROUGH RATES	593, 633, 1462
Favour Foreign Competition	557, 571, 601, 898, 1100, 1389, 1456, 1460-1461
THYROID GLAND	1102
TILLAGE—See also <i>Arable Land</i> ..	204, 521, 525, 591-755, 771, 775, 784-785, 804, 905, 918, 1660, 1686, 1791, 1933
Benefited by Proposed Duties	805, 820, 1198, 1532, 1536, 1555, 1560, 1686, 1783
Decreasing	509, 622, 707, 734, 809, 1235
Through Labour Difficulties	632, 763, 798-799, 810, 850, 1633
Through Low Prices	521, 749, 802, 804, 825, 890, 1195
Employment Increased by	587, 591, 709, 896, 1829
Increased by Store Imports.. .. .	586-587, 789, 807
Increased by Proposed Duties	541, 757, 773, 789, 811, 821, 881, 1505, 1544, 1562, 1783-1784, 1831, 1874
On Small Holdings in Ireland	591, 749, 756, 783-784, 809, 1195
Unremunerative	585, 595, 629, 696, 718, 748, 759, 803, 822, 893
TIMBER	710
TIMOTHY HAY	920
TINNED FRUIT	254, 266, 960
TINNED MEAT	1980

	Paragraph
TIPPERARY	310, 331, 336, 343, 845, 847-849, 914-915, 917, 1239, 1447
Barley Growing	845, 1239
Dairy Farming	845, 847, 914, 915, 919, 1254
Labour Conditions	846, 1239, 1676
TITHES	1022, 1643
TOBACCO	238-239, 1196, 1504, 1529, 1793, 2031-2034
Reduction of Duty Desired	238-239, 360, 779, 807, 952, 1196, 1198
TOBACCO GROWING	238-239, 360, 1195-1196, 2031-2034
TOMATOES	961, 975, 995
Foreign Competition	387, 949, 963, 995
TOOLS—See <i>Implements</i> .	
TOW	1192
TOWN LABOUR	510
TOWN MILLS	1315
TRADE UNIONS	350, 962, 1371
TRADESMEN	530
TRANSPORT FACILITIES—See also <i>Railway Facilities</i> ..	48, 50, 106, 215, 303, 363-4, 366, 590, 593, 929, 962, 1095, 1112, 1137, 1316, 1351, 1410, 1456, 1986
For Fruit	949, 973, 978, 987, 1071
In Ireland	623, 792-793, 1095, 1874
TRANSPORT RATES—See also <i>Freight Rates</i>	303, 977, 1072, 1109, 1899, 1902
Foreign Advantages	880, 1072, 1106, 1108-1109, 1120, 1129, 1136-1137, 1142, 1353, 1405, 1908
In Ireland	761, 1107, 1120
TRAVELLERS	723, 1289
TRAVELLING SCHOOLS	717
TREE	1382, 1426
TREE FRUIT	270, 1291
TRING	496
TRUSTS	1114, 1121, 1129, 1168
TUBERCULIN	835, 1993
TUBERCULOSIS	508, 836, 1102, 1136
TUNIS	1266
TURKEY	1264
TURKEYS	1910
TURNIP	135-137, 215, 281, 292, 551, 586, 599, 688, 785, 807, 829, 868, 1225, 1237, 1988
TURNIP SEED	257, 550-551, 776, 1225
Less Remunerative	550-551, 814, 937
TYRONE	1448, 1636
ULSTER	204, 252, 275, 527, 537, 1185, 1495, 1535, 1538, 1570, 1582
UNEMPLOYMENT	342, 499, 514, 524, 539, 592, 622, 701, 795, 826, 842, 846, 1024, 1164, 1196, 1222
Caused by Imports	801, 847, 1167, 1179, 1284, 1299, 1331, 1437-1439, 1441-1444
Caused by Increased Pasture	614, 740, 767, 825, 1032, 1485, 1501
Causes Emigration	592, 801, 811, 823, 846, 892, 907
UNITED STATES	106, 108, 110, 114, 208, 255, 288, 293-294, 300, 314, 525, 709, 744, 768, 778, 1030, 1039, 1065, 1102, 1121-1122, 1129, 1132-1133, 1164, 1166, 1290, 1298, 1316, 1394, 1400, 1436, 1469, 1473, 1480, 1506, 1833, 1836, 1892, 1904, 1916
Bacon Production	297, 1113, 1115, 1120, 1394
Beet Sugar Production	561-563
Competition in Colonies from	1104, 1361, 1410, 1415-1417, 1574
Competition in U.K from	597, 833, 1179, 1339, 1352, 1366, 1398, 1679, 1784, 1830
In Apples.. .. .	775, 910, 955, 1070
Bacon and Hams	297, 300, 809, 1104, 1124, 1126, 1129, 1131, 1149, 1389, 1391-1393, 1783
Cheese	1117, 1395
Cider	260, 1383-1385, 1513
Flour	761, 1174, 1295, 1300-1301, 1309, 1314, 1317, 1319, 1321, 1325, 1338, 1342, 1344, 1348

UNITED STATES, Competition from— <i>continued.</i>		Paragraph
Lard ..	301, 1116-1117, 1124, 1136, 1391, 1409, 1410, 1415	
Meat ..	758, 1118, 1356, 1386-1387, 1389, 1413, 1812, 1819, 1874, 1926, 1987	
Oil Cake ..	799, 1369, 1370-1372, 1433	
Oatmeal ..	207, 592, 1278, 1293, 1296, 1350-1352, 1357, 1359, 1360-1363	
Starch ..	327, 1364-1365, 1367	
Wheat ..	550, 833, 1166, 1178, 1232, 1313	
Dumping from ..	1290, 1388, 1476	
Flour ..	591, 1166, 1178, 1290, 1302, 1313-1314, 1316, 1320-1321, 1324, 1326-1327, 1332-1336, 1340-1341, 1345-1346, 1348, 1356, 1744, 1755	
Hops ..	1039, 1055	
Implements ..	1240	
Lard ..	1390, 1393, 1410	
Oatmeal ..	207, 1359, 1505	
Oil Cake ..	1367	
Pork ..	299, 1138	
Starch ..	327, 741	
Wheat ..	1292	
Emigration to..	596, 708-709, 749, 811, 853, 896, 1444, 1494	
Export from ..	602, 1166, 1325, 1340	
Export to ..	742, 789, 982, 1133, 1135, 1419, 1834, 2007-2008	
Prevented by Tariff ..	327, 742, 1105, 1122, 1408, 1418-1419, 1420, 1591, 1841, 2006, 2011	
Restricted by Tariff ..	209, 217, 218, 302, 597, 1103, 1418-1419, 1420-1421, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2009	
Farming in ..	525, 685-687, 707, 743-745, 755, 823, 843, 889, 989, 1056, 1109, 1146, 1166-1167, 1356, 1850	
Freight Rates ..	854, 909, 964, 1095, 1108, 1109, 1136, 1178, 1460-1461, 1468, 1652	
Favourable to U.S.A. ..	113-114, 118, 303, 525, 539, 782, 820, 917, 1120, 1137, 1142, 1362, 1446, 1452, 1458, 1460-1461, 1466-1468, 1827	
Fruit Cultivation ..	978	
Import from ..	300, 327, 1070, 1093, 1112, 1232, 1255, 1374, 1784	
Apples ..	259, 979, 1070	
Bacon ..	297, 305-306, 724, 809, 830, 881, 1102, 1113, 1123, 1138, 1391-1392, 1401, 1836	
Beef ..	279, 1093-1094, 1096-1097, 1387-1388, 1819	
Bran ..	1174-1175	
Cattle ..	279, 282, 1095-1096, 1786, 1924	
Cheese ..	1117, 1400-1401	
Cider ..	1384, 1513	
Cotton-Seed Oil ..	1276, 1523	
Flour ..	325-326, 799, 801, 1167, 1173, 1178, 1280, 1296, 1299, 1300, 1302-1308, 1310, 1314, 1316, 1326, 1329, 1330-1331, 1337-1338, 1340-1343, 1345-1346, 1350, 1467, 1475, 1758	
Below Cost ..	1174, 1309-1311, 1313, 1315-1316, 1320, 1324, 1329-1330, 1332, 1335-1339, 1340-1341, 1343	
Below U.K. Cost ..	1309, 1311, 1316, 1322, 1324, 1326, 1334, 1338, 1340, 1342, 1350, 1747	
Below Price in U.S.A. ..	1167, 1178, 1300, 1304, 1308, 1312, 1324, 1327, 1338, 1340, 1346, 1741	
Hops ..	1039, 1040, 1043, 1056, 1069, 1376, 2011	
Implements ..	517	
Lard ..	1116, 1136, 1440, 1523	
Margarine ..	1405	
Meat ..	1094, 1389, 1843, 1887, 1915	
Mutton ..	1097	
Oatmeal ..	207, 1294, 1353-1359, 1360-1362	

UNITED STATES, Import from— <i>continued.</i>							Paragraph
Offals	..	..	..	..	..	..	1174
Sheep	..	..	..	..	..	..	1097
Starch	..	..	..	..	..	..	742, 1366
Wheat	..	526, 1174, 1178, 1272, 1304, 1751, 1766	..	..	..	..	
Import Duties in	..	1298, 1305, 1341, 1345, 1419, 2002, 2005, 2011	..	..	..	..	
On Bacon	..	..	..	..	..	..	1135
Hops	..	..	..	..	..	..	1055, 1074
Linseed Oil	..	..	..	..	..	..	1420, 1431
Maize	..	..	..	..	..	..	1510
Potatoes	..	..	..	..	..	..	217, 602, 833
Starch	..	..	..	..	..	..	742
Wool	..	..	..	..	..	..	602, 820, 2010
Suggested Reduction	..	217, 1422, 1678, 1721, 1766, 2001, 2009, 2010	..	..	..	..	
Import Duties Suggested against	..	497, 541, 762, 966, 1099, 1130, 1138, 1240, 1420, 1513, 1524, 1851-1852, 1860, 1867, 1888	..	..	..	..	
Desirable	..	594, 801, 1423, 1430, 1513, 1679, 1718, 1786, 1801, 1836, 1864, 1882, 1885, 1923, 1958	..	..	..	..	
Undesirable	..	910, 1310, 1879, 1917	..	..	..	..	
Labour Conditions	..	744, 1110, 1121, 1201, 1303, 1309, 1313, 1340, 1409	..	..	..	..	
Machinery	..	552, 854, 935, 1121, 1240-1241, 1243, 1361	..	..	..	..	
Meat Trade	..	602, 1094-1096, 1100, 2011	..	..	..	..	
Milling Industry	..	801, 1168, 1173, 1303, 1307, 1310, 1313, 1332, 1344, 1467, 1553, 1758	..	..	..	..	
Prices	..	266, 562, 741, 1297, 1378, 1420, 1786, 1853	..	..	..	..	
Bacon	..	724, 1120	..	..	..	..	
Flour	..	1330, 1332-1333, 1758, 1760	..	..	..	..	
Wheat	..	743, 1318, 1336, 1338	..	..	..	..	
Railway Rates	..	263, 858, 977, 1120, 1313, 1469	..	..	..	..	
Reciprocity Treaties	..	300, 1129, 1417	..	..	..	..	
Trusts	..	685, 1121, 1129, 1472-1480	..	..	..	..	
Wages	..	563, 843, 1300, 1302, 1311, 1333-1334, 1343, 1359, 1366	..	..	..	..	
URUGUAY	..	1799	..	..	..	..	
VAN HORSES 850							
VEAL	..	181, 185, 189	..	..	..	..	
VEGETABLES—See also <i>Dried</i> —	135-136, 215, 218, 255, 266, 334, 555, 625, 937, 957, 990, 992, 1226, 1254	..	..	..	..	..	
Cultivation	..	215, 217, 591, 954, 970, 975, 984, 1223, 1226	..	..	..	..	
Import	..	181, 340, 387, 957, 983, 994	..	..	..	..	
Import Duty Suggested	..	218, 265, 564, 817, 953, 983, 991, 1514, 1515, 1695	..	..	..	..	
VINERIES	..	980-981	..	..	..	..	
VIRGIN SOIL	..	1030, 1056, 1356, 1643	..	..	..	..	
WAGES —See also <i>Overtime, Perquisites, Piecework</i> .. 157, 206, 316, 338-344, 350, 496, 664-665, 684, 781, 783, 815, 842, 843, 903, 945, 948, 962, 981, 996, 1007, 1074, 1106, 1162, 1525, 1593, 1643, 1749, 1850							
Abroad	..	843, 995, 1135, 1302, 1320, 1359, 1364-1365, 1367-1369, 1370, 1377, 1392, 1396, 1398, 1408-1409, 1505, 1516-1517, 1738, 2005	..	..	..	..	
In France	..	1301, 1343, 1515	..	..	..	..	
Germany	..	1371, 1696	..	..	..	..	
Holland	..	1352-1353, 1404-1405, 1440	..	..	..	..	
Ireland	..	342-343, 749, 760, 800, 804, 819, 829, 907, 916, 1330	..	..	..	..	
Russia	..	1295, 1372	..	..	..	..	
Scotland	..	683-684, 833	..	..	..	..	
U.S.A.	..	1300, 1311, 1333-1334, 1343, 1366	..	..	..	..	
Comparison of	..	206, 495, 501, 508, 510, 515, 780, 958, 1688	..	..	..	..	

WAGES—continued.

Paragraph

Increased	116, 343, 499, 511, 515, 524, 529, 534-535, 538-539, 545, 552, 569, 576, 600-601, 604, 611, 651-652, 658, 674, 696, 707-708, 712, 719, 800, 810, 815, 839, 851, 854, 868, 876, 939, 945, 958, 968, 987, 993, 1027-1028, 1036, 1071, 1087, 1089, 1183, 1499, 1856	
In Ireland	224, 509, 588, 625, 633, 764, 776-777, 786, 791, 804, 823, 846, 880, 890, 897, 916-917, 1119, 1196, 1239, 1545, 1676, 1888	
Scotland	508, 518, 679, 922, 976, 1232-1233	
Increased in Fruit Growing	340, 950, 971	
Hop Growing	240, 997, 1001, 1003, 1010, 1030, 1079, 1082, 1085	
Milling	1029, 1315, 1323	
Increased by Agricultural Prosperity	566, 602, 605, 620, 783, 811, 846, 945, 1026, 1075, 1184, 1441, 1510, 1512	
Increased by Proposed Duties	502, 519, 526, 541, 565, 573, 782, 789, 793, 805-806, 808, 821, 827, 837, 842, 865, 881, 946, 948, 951, 1018-1019, 1027, 1031, 1053, 1481-1483, 1487-1489, 1498-1499, 1510-1512, 1519, 1520, 1522, 1549, 1603, 1621, 1628, 1646, 1715, 1740, 1750, 1756, 1760, 1794, 1856-1857, 1874	
On Bacon	1517-1518	
Corn	589, 769, 1506, 1527, 1552, 1583, 1597, 1629, 1698	
Flour	1502, 1508, 1673, 1724, 1738-1739, 1746-1747, 1750, 1752-1753, 1755	
Hops	1011, 1035, 1038, 1063	
Meat	1882, 1934, 1990	
Lost Through Imports	1179, 1830, 1442-1443, 1498, 1726	
Low Rate Cause Labour Scarcity	600, 700, 775, 921, 1221, 1231, 1445	
Rate of	647-648, 701, 705, 846, 869, 912, 1183	
For Casual Labour	343, 692, 896, 897, 903, 945	
Child Labour	566, 702	
Farm Labour	495, 524, 566, 619, 826, 839, 876, 890, 926, 931, 945, 987, 1152, 1182, 1522, 1685, 1882	
Fruit Growing	966, 969, 987	
Hop Workers	1003, 1006, 1018, 1033, 1052-1053, 1061, 1083	
Horsemen	701, 884	
Shepherds	701, 760, 884, 1183	
Skilled Labour	569, 673, 701, 1007	
Woman Labour	344, 566, 775	
Reduced	499, 518, 524, 843, 1024, 1046, 1076, 1079	
Too High for Profitable Cultivation	1237, 1371, 1659	
Unaffected by Proposed Duties	584, 617, 782, 1556, 1850	
Unchanged	595, 614, 639, 692, 705, 795, 838, 864, 883, 1012, 1014, 1049, 1053, 1056	
WAGGONER	903	
WALES	126-130, 137, 283, 300, 320, 336, 345, 711-713, 715-717, 1231, 1292, 1374, 1631, 1634-1636, 1803, 1815, 1846	
Co-operation in	713, 715, 1250	
WAREHOUSES	1005, 1027	
WARPED LAND	549	
WARWICKSHIRE	321, 1225, 1227, 1246-1247, 1342	
WASTE LAND	992	
WATER MILLS	1137, 1287, 1343, 1345, 1349, 1751	
WATER POWER	541, 636, 1287, 1307	
Wasted	627, 1137, 1286, 1534, 1559	
WATER STRATFORD	1667	
WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES	940	
WATER TRANSPORT—See also Canal—	648, 701, 903, 995, 1454	
Reduces Railway Rates	788, 833, 977-978, 1355	
WATERFORD	595, 1453	

WELLINGBOROUGH	291, 1182-1183	Paragraph
WENDOVER	496	
WENSLEYDALE	870	
WEST AFRICA	1415	
WEST BERKSHIRE	670	
WEST INDIES	966, 1264	
WEST LANDS CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY	939	
WEST MIDLAND COUNTIES	1226	
WEST OF ENGLAND	304, 1142, 1148, 1245	
WEST OF SCOTLAND	921	
WEST SOMERSET	614, 616	
WESTERN COUNTIES' AGRICULTURAL CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION	1245	
WESTERN IRELAND	204, 749, 751-752, 758	
WESTMEATH	343, 727, 756, 800-801, 1892	
WESTMORELAND	203, 606	
WETHERS	1792	
WEXFORD	343, 520-525, 1594	
WHEAT—See also By-products, Corn, Grain, Hard—, Indian—		
	17-18, 21, 24, 31, 35-36, 53, 91, 106-107, 131, 199, 200, 203, 205, 213, 226, 292, 324, 743-744, 836, 1130, 1175, 1221, 1290, 1292, 1341, 1347, 1486, 1639, 1701, 1718, 1765, 1884	
Bounty Desirable	15, 18, 21, 25, 104, 210, 373-374, 498, 704, 844, 953, 1184, 1331, 1499, 1504, 1600, 1606-1613, 1744, 1769	
Undesirable	844, 878, 934	
Cost of Production	205, 568, 743, 1501	
Cultivation	52, 85, 89-91, 115, 125-133, 177, 199, 200, 202, 205, 210, 219, 226, 353, 509, 543, 596, 676, 704, 740, 743-744, 765, 832, 843, 863, 869, 905, 919, 934, 937, 1167, 1223-1229, 1501, 1529, 1573, 1580, 1594, 1607, 1609, 1614, 1677, 1683, 1744	
Decreased	52, 61-64, 123, 126, 176, 199, 200-205, 224, 255, 306, 538, 543, 568, 603, 613, 654, 671, 691, 737, 740, 867, 874, 889, 893, 1124, 1159, 1223, 1227, 1229, 1231, 1234-1235, 1238-1239, 1285, 1290, 1302, 1331, 1344, 1484, 1497, 1502, 1541, 1558, 1768	
Labour for	740, 945, 1125, 1496, 1612, 1693	
Profits	494, 514, 543, 549, 610, 629, 637, 671, 691, 699, 745, 832, 874, 889, 911, 945, 1159, 1225, 1233, 1236, 1239, 1270, 1273, 1385, 1501, 1558, 1584, 1594, 1635, 1667, 1763	
Unsuitable Land	594, 920, 1635	
Dumping	1290-1292, 1498	
Foreign Competition at Home	58, 107, 115, 322, 592, 889, 917, 1178, 1237, 1284, 1288, 1291, 1302, 1315, 1412, 1497, 1549, 1674, 1744, 1749, 1753	
Foreign Import Duties	709, 843, 1330-1331, 1421, 1424, 1427, 1435	
Freight Rates	105, 113-114, 685, 767, 880, 1177-1178, 1325, 1458-1459, 1612, 1703, 1751	
Grown for Straw	372, 575, 691, 699, 763, 874, 1221, 1224, 1564	
Import	31, 36, 53, 85, 92, 163-168, 175-177, 324, 355, 879	
Desirable	325, 1177, 1438, 1530, 1736, 1751	
From France	758, 1292, 1316, 1325-1326, 1340, 1434, 1530, 1647, 1751, 1766	
U.S.A.	526, 550, 745, 833, 1305, 1313, 1336, 1338, 1340, 1346	
Preference Suggested	376, 398, 526, 572, 602, 641, 1147, 1498, 1502-1503, 1613, 1643-1657, 1684, 1723, 1743, 1751, 1866, 1868	
Prices	14, 23-24, 31, 35, 53-60, 65-72, 82, 86-88, 92, 93-99, 100-103, 105, 375-376, 524, 528, 543-544, 642, 685, 704, 743, 745-746, 765, 827, 843-844, 862-863, 867, 873, 879, 882, 884, 911, 944, 952, 1007, 1147, 1155, 1160-1161, 1221, 1230, 1238, 1301, 1318, 1333, 1338, 1569, 1584, 1664, 1667, 1670, 1693, 1696	

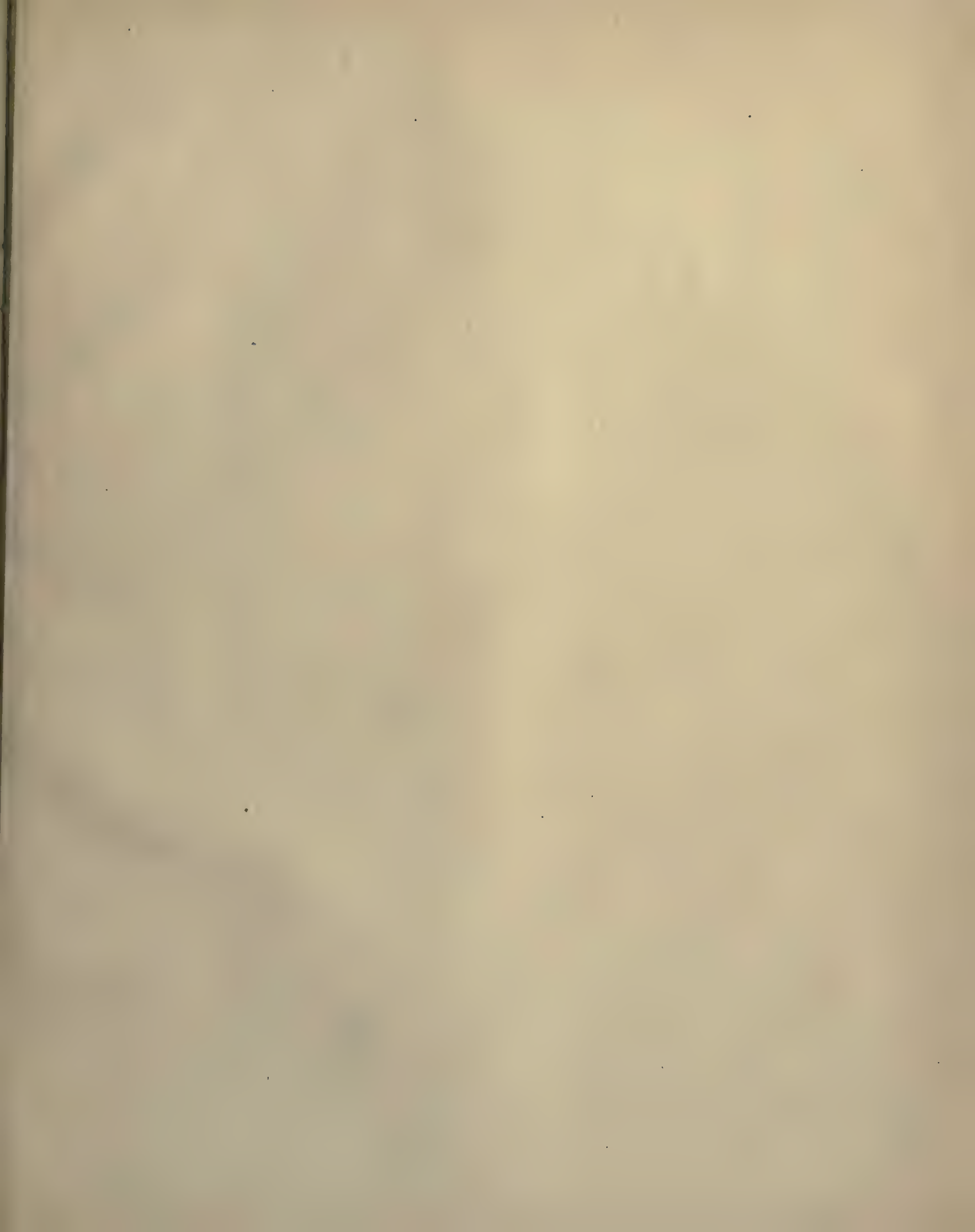
WHEAT—Prices—continued.

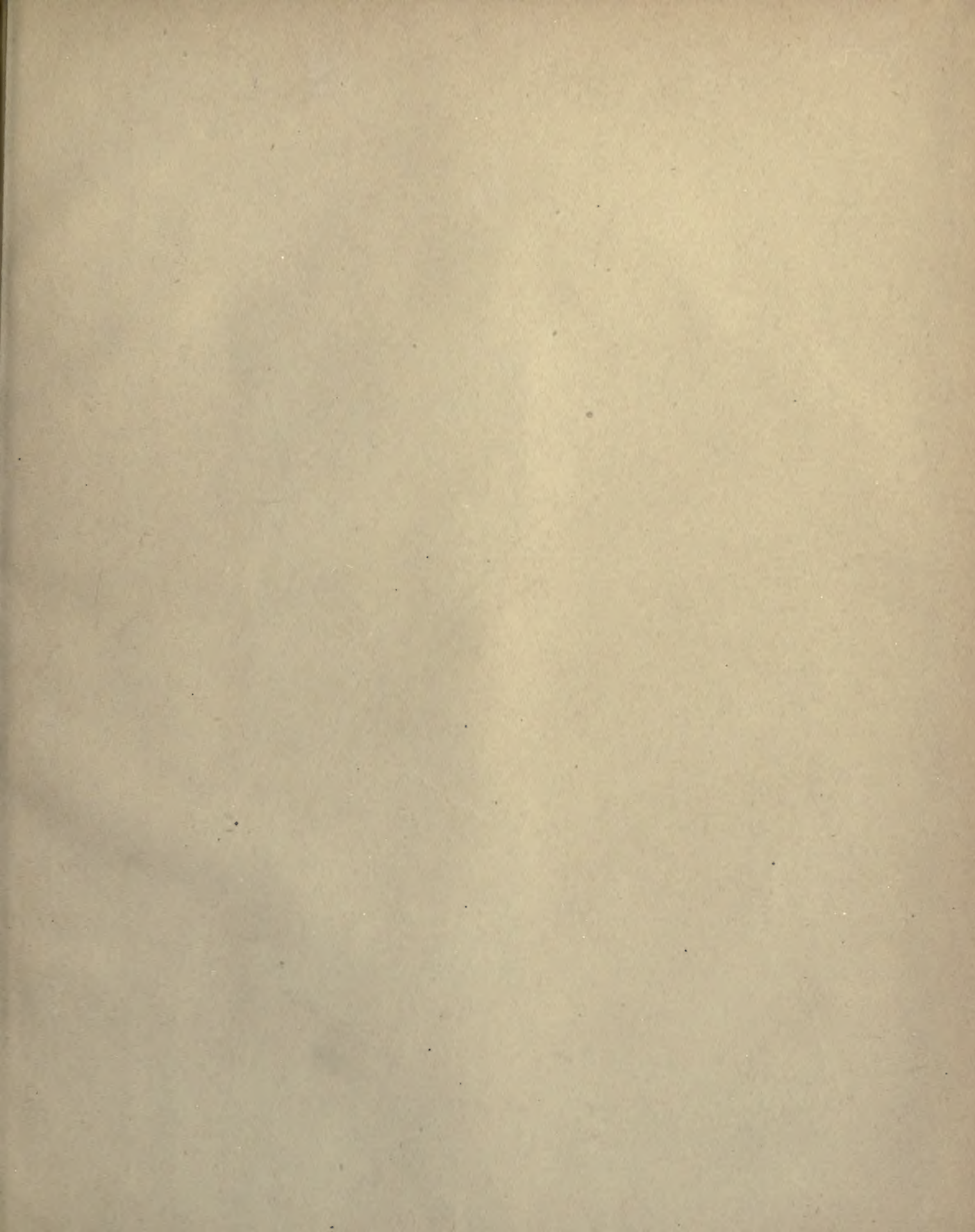
Paragraph

Fallen ..	58, 104, 107, 115, 118, 199, 202, 205, 564, 568, 575, 610, 707, 718, 803-804, 822, 847, 851, 944, 1159, 1231, 1234, 1239, 1329, 1571, 1630
Risen ..	25, 111, 637, 889, 892
Proposed Duty ..	210, 376, 393, 501, 573, 612, 899, 913, 928, 1154, 1346, 1438, 1491-1492, 1495, 1504, 1507, 1532 <i>et seq.</i>
Beneficial..	526, 541, 594, 608, 617, 762, 773, 820, 844, 919, 1125, 1137, 1147, 1156, 1164, 1169, 1486, 1488, 1497, 1501, 1503, 1532 <i>et seq.</i> , 1626, 1650-1651, 1691, 1700, 1709, 1722, 1728, 1743-1746, 1750, 1756
Beneficial if Bounty Granted ..	1606-1613
Beneficial if Taxes Reduced ..	1597-1605
Higher Duty Desired ..	375, 913, 933, 936, 1025, 1344, 1498, 1501-1502, 1504, 1578, 1608, 1610, 1634-1635, 1640, 1643, 1645-1646, 1658-1695, 1701, 1708, 1734
Lower Duty Desired ..	936, 1483, 1489, 1497-1498, 1708
Of Little Benefit ..	532, 617, 1490, 1588, 1604, 1618, 1622, 1628 <i>et seq.</i> , 1706, 1724-1725, 1729, 1732, 1768
Of No Benefit ..	693, 1346, 1497, 1503, 1528, 1574-1576, 1633-1634, 1638, 1642, 1649, 1667, 1671, 1693, 1705, 1707, 1714, 1732, 1756-1757
Prices Not Raised by ..	497, 843, 881, 919, 1100, 1156, 1198, 1489, 1499, 1502, 1563, 1609, 1611, 1641, 1683, 1693, 1704, 1707, 1715, 1727, 1740-1741, 1748, 1752, 1754
Prices Raised by ..	1498, 1501, 1542, 1573, 1670, 1741, 1752, 1756, 1866
Undesirable ..	694, 793, 910, 913, 919, 953, 1483, 1524, 1526, 1561, 1581, 1591, 1598, 1606, 1617, 1698-1699, 1711, 1714, 1718-1719, 1722, 1728, 1746, 1753, 1755, 1757, 1759, 1765-1766
Quality ..	863, 919, 1159, 1177-1178, 1304, 1307, 1310, 1758
Of Colonial..	1174, 1177, 1272, 1568
Foreign ..	1174, 1177, 1272-1273, 1291, 1329, 1346-1347, 1516, 1659
Registration Duty ..	376, 1345, 1347, 1493, 1526-1527, 1629, 1632, 1718, 1759, 1818
Beneficial..	594, 817, 1164, 1184, 1289, 1290, 1302, 1304, 1308, 1317, 1537-1538, 1552, 1555, 1579, 1589, 1651, 1668, 1674, 1708, 1739, 1740, 1748, 1761
Price Not Raised by ..	642, 693, 698, 704, 742, 933-934, 1156, 1289, 1290, 1528, 1569, 1599, 1600, 1656, 1679, 1700, 1727-1728
Sources of Supply ..	1255-1281
WHEAT BRAN ..	290, 292, 1174, 1581, 1624, 1706, 1709, 1766
WHEAT CLEANING ..	1303
WHEAT CROP ..	494, 556, 565, 1173, 1223, 1307
WHEAT LAND ..	605, 707, 858, 1222, 1285, 1344, 1545
WHEAT OFFAL ..	1170-1171, 1283, 1337, 1540, 1587, 1745, 1747, 1757
WHEAT STARCH ..	326-327, 739-742, 1365-1366, 1509-1510
Dumping ..	741-742
Foreign Import Duties ..	1365
Import ..	741-742, 1365-1366, 1509-1510
Import Duty Suggested ..	1509
Mills Closed ..	741-742, 1509
WHEAT STRAW ..	203, 575, 632, 691, 699, 763, 874, 1221, 1224, 1270, 1564
WHEAT TRUSTS ..	1336, 1474, 1480
WHEATMEAL ..	1746
WHEELWRIGHTS ..	1229
WHEY ..	1138, 1764
WHISKY ..	1525, 1678, 1734
WHOLESALE GROCERY AND PROVISION TRADES ..	1435

Para 178

WICKLOW ..	343, 818-819, 820, 850, 1235, 1725
Cottage Accommodation ..	819, 852
Railway Rates ..	820, 1236
WIGSTON ..	795
WILLOWS ..	594, 906
WILTSHIRE ..	295, 297, 343, 1110, 1140, 1227, 1246, 1307
Pig Feeding ..	294, 297-298, 303, 1105, 1120, 1132, 1140-1141, 1507, 2010
Small Holdings ..	21, 1110, 1140, 1144-1146
WINFRITH FARMERS' CLUB ..	276, 690
WINTER DAIRYING ..	319, 540, 723, 734, 896
WINTER FARMING ..	203, 895
WINTER FEEDING ..	1236
WINTER LABOUR ..	563, 1061
WISBECH ..	1880
WITNESSES, DRAFT QUESTIONS TO ..	477-492
WOKING ..	944
WOLVERCOTE ..	932
WOLVERHAMPTON ..	912
WOOD PULP ..	1918
WOODSTOCK ..	932
WOOL—See also <i>Raw</i> — ..	583-584, 759, 1462-1464, 1493, 1801, 1954
Foreign Import Duties on ..	602, 820, 1721, 1766, 1958, 2002, 2010-2011
Prices ..	281, 518, 595, 626, 701, 727, 748, 759, 763, 863, 894, 1237-1238
Decreased ..	518, 544, 584, 711, 718, 790, 822, 825, 925, 1159, 1225, 1278, 1782
Increased ..	276, 279, 595, 597, 603, 699, 846
WOOLLEN FACTORIES ..	626, 636, 805
WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL ..	1072, 2047-2048
WORCESTERSHIRE ..	200, 260, 1010, 1062, 1066, 1070-1072, 1285
Asparagus Growing ..	956-957, 992
Co-operation ..	959, 1072, 1247-1248
Cottage Accommodation ..	958, 1072, 1089
Fruit Cultivation ..	251, 279, 954, 956, 992, 1069, 1070-1071
Apples ..	268, 955, 1070, 1079
Hop Growing ..	240, 243, 1009, 1010, 1066, 1089, 1070, 1074, 1089, 1457
Capital Invested ..	1009, 1010, 1065, 1090
Labour Conditions ..	958, 992, 1010, 1070-1071, 1074, 1089
Local Rates ..	959, 1010, 1065, 1073
Rents ..	956, 1071
Wages ..	343, 958, 1010, 1071, 1089
WORCESTERSHIRE CHAMBER OF AGRICULTURE ..	307-308, 1066
WORK REFUSED ..	902
WORKING CLASSES ..	1143
WORKING EXPENSES ..	1224, 1235
WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT ..	1408
WYE ..	997-998, 1034, 2032
YEOVIL ..	535-536
YORKSHIRE ..	201, 215, 222, 256, 264, 312, 321, 336, 343, 696, 870, 900, 902-903
YORKSHIRE UNION OF AGRICULTURAL CLUBS AND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE ..	272, 696
YOUNG CATTLE ..	755, 798, 1879
YOUNG COWS ..	1226
YOUNG HORSES ..	1074
YOUNG PIGS ..	1074
YOUNG STOCK ..	829, 1074, 1225, 1570, 1834, 1875, 1927, 1950





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